DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 349 412 CE 061 880

AUTHOR	Zellman, Gail L.; And Others
TITLE	Access to and Use of Vocational Education in Teen Parent Programs.
INSTITUTION	National Center for Research in Vocational Education, Berkeley, CA.; Rand Corp., Santa Monica, Calif.
SPONS AGENCY	Office of Vocational and Adult Education (ED), Washington, DC.
PUB DATE	Aug 92
CONTRACT	V051A80004-88A
NOTE	105p.
AVAILABLE FROM	NCRVE Materials Distribution Service, Horrabin Hall 46, Western Illinois University, Macomb, IL 61455 (order no. MDS-152, $7).
PUB TYPE	Reports - Research/Technical (143)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC05 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Access to Education; *Early Parenthood; Job Training; *Mothers; *Parent Education; Parenting Skills; *Program Implementation; Secondary Education; Student Attitudes; Teacher Attitudes; *Vocational Education
IDENTIFIERS	Family Support Act 1988

ABSTRACT

This research study sought: (1) to examine the range of vocational education opportunities available to young mothers enrolled in teen parent programs; (2) to explore the degree of access to these opportunities; (3) to examine vocational education use; and (4) to assess the likely impact of the Family Support Act on teen parents and on the programs that serve them. Data were gathered through a telephone survey of 49 nationally representative school districts, through more intensive telephone interviews in 71 teen parent programs in those districts, and through site visits to 14 teen parent programs. Results of the study indicated that vocational education is available to more than half of the teen parents enrolled in teen parent programs, but that access to vocational education is often stymied by attitudes of students, lack of time, lack of child care flexibility, reluctance to leave the program site, and a lack of a clear sense of its importance. Despite strong beliefs among program staff that teen mothers must become economically self-sufficient, they may fail to push vocational education for reasons of their own, including concerns about interfering in personal decisions and conveying negative messages, beliefs in the primacy of parenting education, and sympathy for the many demands young mothers face. Only in those programs with a primary emphasis on job training did most teen parents connect with vocational education. From the data, it was unclear whether the Family Support Act will result in any additional services to parenting teens. (The report includes 91 references and an appendix that outlines the provisions of the Family Support Act.) (KC)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality

- Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy

ED349412

NCRVE

National Center for Research in Vocational Education

University of California, Berkeley

ACCESS TO AND USE OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN TEEN PARENT PROGRAMS

CE061880

Supported by
the Office of Vocational and Adult Education,
U.S. Department of Education

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

This publication is available from the:

National Center for Research in Vocational Education
Materials Distribution Service
Western Illinois University
46 Horrabin Hall
Macomb, IL 61455

800-637-7652 (Toll Free)

ACCESS TO AND USE OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN TEEN PARENT PROGRAMS

Gail L. Zellman
Christine Feifer
Amy E. Hirsch

RAND
Santa Monica, CA

National Center for Research in Vocational Education
University of California at Berkeley
1995 University Avenue, Suite 375
Berkeley, CA 94704

Supported by
The Office of Vocational and Adult Education,
U.S. Department of Education

August, 1992

MDS-152

CE 061880

FUNDING INFORMATION

Project Title:	National Center for Research in Vocational Education
Grant Number:	V051A80004-88A
Act under which Funds Administered:	Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act P.L. 98-524
Source of Grant:	Office of Vocational and Adult Education U.S. Department of Education Washington, DC 20202
Grantee:	The Regents of the University of California National Center for Research in Vocational Education 1995 University Avenue, Suite 375 Berkeley, CA 94704
Director:	Charles S. Benson
Percent of Total Grant Financed by Federal Money:	100%
Dollar Amount of Federal Funds for Grant:	$4,000,000
Disclaimer:	This publication was prepared pursuant to a grant with the Office of Vocational and Adult Education, U.S. Department of Education. Grantees undertaking such projects under government sponsorship are encouraged to express freely their judgement in professional and technical matters. Points of view or opinions do not, therefore, necessarily represent official U.S. Department of Education position or policy.
Discrimination:	Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 states: "No person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance." Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 states: "No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance." Therefore, the National Center for Research in Vocational Education project, like every program or activity receiving financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Education, must be operated in compliance with these laws.

RAND is a nonprofit institution that seeks to improve public policy through research and analysis. Publications of RAND do not necessarily reflect the opinions or policies of the sponsors of RAND research.

Published 1992 by RAND
1700 Main Street, P.O. Box 2138, Santa Monica, CA 90407-2138

PREFACE

This report was prepared for the National Center for Research in Vocational Education. The objectives of this research were fourfold: (1) to examine the range of vocational education opportunities available to young mothers enrolled in teen parent programs; (2) to explore the degree of access to these opportunities; (3) to examine vocational education use; and 4) to assess the likely impact of the Family Support Act on teen parents and on the programs that serve them.

The report presents results from a telephone survey in 49 nationally representative school districts, from more intensive telephone interviews in 71 teen parent programs in those districts, and from site visits to 14 teen parent programs sponsored by schools and community-based organizations.

These data should help policymakers, professionals, and other teen parent advocates better understand vocational education in the context of teen parent programs. They may also suggest new approaches to providing vocational education to teen mothers.

SUMMARY

BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

Both teenage pregnancy and vocational education have long been of concern to policymakers, youth advocates, and the general public. In many respects, however, these concerns have been independent ones. Early vocational education efforts focused largely on males, who were widely viewed as the key to reducing poverty, unemployment, and welfare dependence (Simms and Leitch, 1983). As growing numbers of women have entered the workforce in recent years, it has become apparent that women would benefit as well from training and job assistance. Nevertheless, our society continues to be ambivalent about whether employment by mothers of very young children is appropriate or ultimately beneficial to children, mothers, or society. This ambivalence has been evidenced in programs for teenage mothers, which, until recently, have rarely offered or brokered vocational education or employment-related services to enrollees (Polit, 1986).

The Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act, Public Law 98-524, passed in 1984, codified concerns about equal access to vocational education for women. These same forces have converged, along with a strong emphasis in the Reagan era on reducing the costs of social welfare programs, to promote welfare reform efforts focused on making recipients work. The Family Support Act of 1988 requires each state to develop a Job Opportunities and Basic Skills (JOBS) program designed to promote this end.

The purpose of this study was to examine the provision of vocational education opportunities to two groups of pregnant and parenting teenagers: (1) those who remain in school and enroll in special school-based or school-sponsored programs for pregnant and parenting students, and (2) those who leave school and enroll at some point in a community-based program that serves pregnant and parenting teens.

Six specific objectives were defined:

1. To explore vocational education in the context of secondary school programs for pregnant and parenting high school and middle school students.
2. To examine the degree of access to vocational education available to pregnant and parenting students in secondary schools.
3. To examine the attitudinal context in which pregnant and parenting students seek and enroll in vocational education.
4. To compare vocational education opportunities and access in special school programs with such opportunities and access in community-based programs.
5. To identify programs or efforts that appear to facilitate the acquisition of job-related skills among pregnant and parenting teenagers and that increase their immediate or future employability.
6. To analyze the effects to date of the Family Support Act on teenage parents and on the programs that serve them.

METHODS

To address study objectives, we engaged in five different data collection activities. First, we conducted exploratory phone interviews with respondents across the country about pregnant and parenting students and vocational education. Second, we conducted semistructured telephone interviews in 49 randomly selected school districts in seven randomly selected states. More intensive telephone interviews in 71 teen parent programs in those districts were included in this task as well. Third, we visited 11 school-based or school-sponsored programs for pregnant and parenting students in eight school districts around the country. Three community-sponsored programs were visited as part of our fourth data collection activity. Finally, we conducted follow-up telephone interviews with those whose programs we had visited to discuss the effect of the Family Support Act on program operations and program enrollees.

FINDINGS

School District Policies

Most of the districts in our sample of 49 had in some way formally recognized the special needs of pregnant and parenting students. A little over half (56 percent) of the districts that we surveyed permit pregnant and parenting students to receive high school credit for enrollment in adult community education courses—a more liberal policy than one allowing only general equivalency diploma (GED) credit. Just over half of the districts that we surveyed have designated a person at the district level to be formally responsible for pregnant and parenting students. Just under half (43 percent) of the districts in our sample extend homebound instruction in the absence of medical indication to pregnant and parenting students; most districts make this service available if a doctor certifies that the student is unable to attend school.

Two policies were repeatedly identified during site visits as having the potential to negatively affect parenting students: (1) strict school attendance requirements, and (2) strict vocational education eligibility criteria. State-level attendance policies in four of the five states we visited limit the number of excused absences a student may have and still get credit for a course. In only one of these four states were absences related to pregnancy or parenting officially excluded from the count. In only one district of the three we visited that had vocational education eligibility requirements had any effort been made to help teen parents meet them.

Ninety-two school-based programs for teen parents were identified in the 49 districts. In most of the districts that we visited, the formal programs for pregnant and parenting students constituted the district's sole programmatic response to young mothers. Most of the programs provide enrollees with activities to build self-confidence, parenting education, basic education, remedial education, and advanced academics. Most provide transportation to enrollees (and sometimes to their babies). Most provide on-site child care to enrollees' children or provide some support for child care off-site.

There was remarkable consensus among programs about their goals. Program goals fell into three categories: (1) educational goals, including preventing dropout, completing high school, and getting a GED; (2) parenting outcomes, including healthy babies, healthy mothers, and parental competence; and (3) employment outcomes, including job skills, job placement, and economic self-sufficiency. Another common goal, enhancing self-esteem, was seen as a desired outcome to be achieved through efforts in each of the other three categories. Schooling and parenting goals were considered critical in all programs; employment goals were considered far less important in most.

Vocational Education in School-Sponsored Teen Parent Programs

Staff support. School staff everywhere strongly support the goal of economic self-sufficiency for teen mothers. But they are often reluctant to actively advocate vocational education as a means of achieving self-sufficiency for fear that teen mothers will come to believe that they are incapable of more academic pursuits. Staff also worry about overloading young mothers.

Opportunities for vocational education. No surveyed districts had any formal barriers to vocational education for pregnant and parenting students, whether they attended regular school or special programs. All teen parent programs in our fieldwork sample provide career guidance. Skills training, through vocational coursework or on-the-job training, is available to enrollees in most. These opportunities are usually available outside the program, in classes that mix parenting students with their nonparenting peers.

Vocational education access. One-quarter of the programs included in our sample provide teen parent program enrollees better access to workforce-related vocational education than was available to nonparenting students. One-third of programs were rated as providing the same "true" access to vocational education opportunities for program enrollees as was provided to nonparenting students. Another third of teen parent programs were rated as providing pregnant and parenting students unequal and inferior access. Level of access could not be assessed in the remaining programs.

In general, use of skills training is fairly low in the 11 programs that we visited. Programs with clear self-sufficiency or employment development goals are more likely to enroll teen mothers in vocational education. Barriers to use include child care that may end before job placements do, transportation that fails to take into account the need to return at day's end to the child care center, conflicts between parenting and vocational education goals, and the tendency among staff to leave decisions about vocational education to teen mothers.

Choosing gender-nontraditional careers. Adult respondents were virtually unanimous in endorsing the concept of gender-nontraditional careers for teen parents as a means of ensuring an adequate income. But respondents everywhere perceived that efforts to encourage such careers would be limited at best in their impact. This sense of resignation led staff to back off when they might have jumped in to reinforce or facilitate the kind of career choice they wished students to make.

Community-Based Programs

To a substantial degree, the community programs we visited share the same overarching goals for teen parents as the school-based ones. Only those programs that receive outside funds that mandate job skills training and set up job placement as a program outcome devote substantial time to these latter goals.

When vocational education is available on-site, many enrollees participate in it. Vocational education that is available in a different program on the same site (co-site) attracts fewer enrollees. And, when the only opportunities are available off-site, participation is low, even when transportation is available. As in the school-based programs, when employability is a clearly specified program goal, the likelihood that program enrollees will participate in vocational education is enhanced.

Family Support Act Implementation and Effects

The Family Support Act (FSA), the latest in a series of welfare reform efforts, is designed to replace welfare benefits with employment by reducing employment barriers such as lack of child care, lack of marketable skills, and limited educational credentials.

In the communities investigated, we found few effects of JOBS on teen parents or on the programs that serve them. Nevertheless, staff in all programs who were familiar with JOBS felt positively about the FSA, citing the benefits JOBS might offer participants, especially the extra services, attention, and guidance. From our data, however, it is unclear whether JOBS will result in any additional services to parenting teens.

CONCLUSIONS

The provision of any vocational education in the context of special programs for teen parents requires difficult decisions and tradeoffs among a number of pressing needs. More difficult still is the provision of vocational education that pregnant and parenting teens are able and willing to use.

Program enrollees may not take advantage of vocational education opportunities for a number of reasons, including lack of time, lack of child care flexibility, reluctance to leave the program site, and lack of a clear sense of its importance. Despite strong beliefs among program staff that teen mothers must become economically self-sufficient, they may not push vocational education for reasons of their own, including concerns about interfering in personal decisions and conveying negative messages, beliefs in the primacy of parenting education, and sympathy for the many demands young mothers face. Limited attention in most teen parent programs to these issues and the dilemmas that underlie them reduce the use and utility of vocational education.

Teen parent programs have taken on a great deal, a reflection of the many pressing needs that teen mothers bring to them. Whether these programs can or even should attempt to provide vocational education, and if so, what kinds, remains an open question. Much depends on program goals, school district, community and program resources, and the service model to which the teen parent program ascribes. But regardless of what vocational education is provided by the program, stronger emphasis on the need for vocational education at some point, combined with concrete career planning, would greatly benefit program enrollees and send them an important if more complex message than they currently receive about the joys and responsibilities of parenting.

CONTENTS

PREFACE iii

SUMMARY v

TABLES xi

Section

1. INTRODUCTION AND METHODS 1
   Historical Background 1
   Teenage Pregnancy and Parenting 1
   Consequences of Teen Births 2
   Vocational Education in Secondary Schools 5
   Legal Context 7
   Current Emphases 9
   Study Objectives 10
   Methods 11
   Fieldwork 16
   Scope and Limitations of the Analysis 17
   Organization of the Report 17

2. DISTRICT POLICIES AND PROGRAMS FOR PREGNANT AND PARENTING STUDENTS 18
   District Policies and Practices 18
   Attendance and Program Eligibility 20
   Pregnant and Parenting Program Availability 21
   Program Components 22
   Program Models 24
   Program Goals 26
   Program Activities and Services 28
   Summary and Conclusions 29

3. VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN SCHOOL-SPONSORED TEEN PARENT PROGRAMS 31
   Vocational Education in Teen Parent Programs 31
   Vocational Education Opportunities 31
   Vocational Education Access and Use 34
   Choosing Gender-Nontraditional Careers 41
   Summary 46

4. COMMUNITY-BASED PROGRAMS 47
   Introduction 47
   The Community Program Sample 48
   Fieldwork 48
   Scope and Limitations of the Analysis 49
   Program Impetus 49
   Program Models 49

Program Goals 50
Who is Served 52
Recruitment and Retention 52
Services Provided 53
Flexibility of Services 53
Vocational Education Opportunities 55
Vocational Education Use 55
Conclusions 57

5. FAMILY SUPPORT ACT IMPLEMENTATION AND EFFECTS 58
Introduction 58
Provisions of the Family Support Act 58
FSA Data 59
Summary and Conclusions 70

6. FACILITATING ECONOMIC SELF-SUFFICIENCY FOR TEENAGE PARENTS: STRENGTHENING THE ROLE OF TEEN PARENT PROGRAMS 72
Meeting Long-Term Needs in Short-Term Programs: Parenting, Basic Skills, and Job-Skills Training 72
Challenge or Accommodation: Reconciling Teen Mothers' Needs and Limits 74
Optimizing Job-Skills Acquisition in a Changing Vocational Education Context 76
Rethinking Vocational Education for Teen Mothers 77
Child Care 78
Vocational Education as a Program Priority 78
Staff Support 79
Summary 79

Appendix: THE FAMILY SUPPORT ACT 81

REFERENCES 87

TABLES

1.1. Vocational Education Opportunities Available to Program Enrollees in School-Sponsored Programs 15
2.1. Prevalence of District-Level Policies Relevant to Pregnant and Parenting Students 18
2.2. Programs for Pregnant and Parenting Students Identified in District-Level Interviews 22
2.3. Frequency of Specific Program Components by Program Type 23
2.4. Fieldwork Program Locations by Breadth of Services 26
2.5. Program Goals by Program Type 27
3.1. Vocational Education Opportunities Offered in Telephone Interviewed Programs 32
3.2. Vocational Education Opportunities Offered by Visited Teen Parenting Programs 33
3.3. Utilization of Vocational Education in Visited Programs 36
3.4. Vocational Education Use as a Function of Employability Goal 37
4.1. Characteristics of Community Programs Visited 50
4.2. Use of Vocational Education Opportunities in Community-Based Programs 56
4.3. Vocational Education Use as a Function of Employability Goal 56
5.1. State-Level JOBS Programs in the Seven Sampled States 62
5.2. Effects of JOBS on Teen Parent Programs 62
5.3. Proportion of Teen Parent Enrollees Participating in JOBS 64

1. INTRODUCTION AND METHODS

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Both teenage pregnancy and vocational education have long been of concern to policymakers, youth advocates, and the general public. In many respects, however, these concerns have been independent ones. Early vocational education efforts focused largely on males, who were widely viewed as the key to reducing poverty, unemployment, and welfare dependence (Simms and Leitch, 1983). As growing numbers of women have entered the workforce in recent years, it has become apparent that women would benefit as well from training and job assistance. By the late 1970s, women were enrolling in federal job training programs at rates equal to or above those of men (Westat, 1980). Nevertheless, our society continues to be ambivalent about whether employment by mothers of very young children is appropriate or ultimately beneficial to children, mothers, or society. This ambivalence has been evidenced in programs for teenage mothers, which, until recently, have rarely offered or brokered vocational education or employment-related services to enrollees (Polit, 1986). It has also been evident in the debate surrounding welfare reform, particularly whether mothers of very young children should be required to work or receive job training as a condition of receiving welfare (e.g., Sanger, 1990).

TEENAGE PREGNANCY AND PARENTING

Although rates of teenage childbearing have been declining in recent years (e.g., GAO, 1986; Baldwin, 1981; O'Connell and Rogers, 1984), recent data indicate that this downturn may be ending. Between 1984 and 1985 the birth rate among teenage women rose nationally by 1 percent (NCHS, 1985). In 1988 the teenage birth rate rose again; the sharpest increase was among those aged 15–17 (NCHS, 1990).

Whether this increase continues or not, teenage pregnancy and parenthood will continue to be a major concern to policymakers, service providers, and researchers for several reasons. First, large numbers of young women become teenage mothers (Zelnik and Kantner, 1980). There were nearly one-half million births to women under age 20 in 1985 alone (Hughes et al., 1988).

Second, in recent years births to teenagers have come to represent an increasing percentage of all births. In some larger cities and among certain ethnic groups, the teen birth rate is as high as 20.1 percent of all births (Hughes et al., 1988).

Third, out-of-wedlock births to women under age 20 rose from under 100,000 in 1960 to almost 250,000 in 1978 (NCHS, 1980). By 1985, 34 percent of all unmarried mothers were teens (Hughes et al., 1988). This upturn, however, is not so much the result of an increased rate of conceptions to unmarried women as it is of choices of pregnant teenagers not to marry (Baldwin, 1977). Indeed, the proportion of births to married teens has fallen from 70 percent in 1970 to 51 percent in 1980, and 36 percent in 1987 (Miller and Moore, 1990). More than 90 percent of black teens who deliver babies are unmarried (Moore, 1988). Many applaud the decreasing incidence of marriage; they cite studies indicating that early and precipitous marriage usually worsens the long-term outlook for the teenage mother and her child (e.g., Moore and Caldwell, 1981).

Finally, relinquishment of infants is, in effect, not an option for most pregnant teenagers, and particularly for blacks. Data from surveys in 1971, 1976, and 1982 indicate that relinquishment rates for unmarried white mothers fell from 18 percent in 1971 to 7 percent in 1976 and 1982. Among unmarried black mothers, the proportion over this same period declined from 2 percent to less than 1 percent (Bachrach, 1986). These declines have occurred despite recent data suggesting that relinquishment results in better outcomes for the birth mother, including delayed marriage, increased likelihood of employment six and twelve months after the birth, and greater likelihood of living in a higher-income household (McLaughlin, Manninen, and Winges, 1988).

CONSEQUENCES OF TEEN BIRTHS

Recent research increasingly points to the many negative consequences of single teenage parenthood to mothers, their babies, and society. Women who begin childbearing as teenagers are more likely than young women who postpone a first birth to have low educational attainment, to be poor, and to depend on welfare for longer periods of time (e.g., Brindis and Jeremy, 1988; Hofferth, 1987). These young women are more likely to have rapid additional pregnancies as well.

Children

The children of teenage mothers also suffer. Incidence of low birthweight infants and infant mortality rates are higher among the offspring of young mothers (NCHS, 1980). Children of young parents are also disadvantaged in a number of developmental domains (Miller and Moore, 1990). The children of teenage mothers tend to lag cognitively behind demographically similar peers (e.g., Baldwin and Cain, 1980). Such findings have been attributed to poorer-quality interactions between adolescents and their children, and less-positive attitudes about being parents. Several studies find that adolescents score lower than older mothers on the HOME (Home Observation for Measurement of the Environment) scale, and participate less in play and vocalization when observed with their infants (Coll, Hoffman, and Oh, 1987; Lester and Rhoades, 1989; Culp et al., 1989).

Early evidence pointed to higher rates of emotional and behavioral difficulties among the children of teenage mothers (e.g., Kellam et al., 1982). Recent studies point to more negative perceptions of their infants by teen mothers as a possible contributor. Most (63 to 67 percent) adolescents report moderately difficult to difficult infant temperaments; only 10 to 28 percent of older mothers report this (Benn and Saltz, 1989; Zeanah et al., 1987; Carey and McDevitt, 1978). Other data suggest that children seen as difficult by their parents are at much higher risk for developing behavior problems (Bates, Maslin, and Trankel, 1985; Chess and Thomas, 1984).

Schooling

Pregnancy remains a major precipitator of school dropout among female students (McGee, 1988b; Mauldon and Morrison, 1989). Some evidence indicates that the majority of pregnant teenagers drop out of school (Haggstrom et al., 1981). Estimates suggest that pregnant and parenting students constitute half or more of the female dropout population in most school districts (McGee, 1988b). Further, data from Mott and Marsiglio (1985) suggest that dropout rates are higher the younger the teenage mother. For example, 70 percent of students who were younger than 15 at the time of a first birth left school, whereas the rate for 16- and 17-year-olds was about half.

These same data indicate that eventually receiving a general equivalency diploma (GED) or graduating from high school remained least likely for the youngest mothers.

Recent data suggest that as many as 40 percent of high school dropouts return to school at a later point and complete their high school education (Mauldon and Morrison, 1989; Congressional Research Service, 1988; Furstenberg, Brooks-Gunn, and Morgan, 1987). Having a baby after leaving school is a strong predictor of nonresumption. However, mothers who gave birth while enrolled in school and then left were as likely to resume schooling as their nonparenting peers (Mauldon and Morrison, 1989).

Welfare Use

A large literature finds that teenage mothers use welfare at high rates, indicating widespread poverty in families headed by young mothers. Women who were teenagers when they bore their first child account for more than half of the total budget for AFDC (Aid to Families with Dependent Children) (Ellwood, 1986; Maxfield and Rucci, 1986; Murray, 1986). In 1975, federal and state governments spent an estimated $8.6 billion on cash benefits, Food Stamps, and Medicaid services to mothers and children in AFDC families in which the mother was a teenager when she bore her first child (Moore and Burt, 1982). By 1989, the single year public cost for such families had increased to $21.55 billion, excluding housing subsidies, special education, foster care, or day care costs (Center for Population Options, 1990).

Although use of welfare is common among teenage mothers, being a teenage mother does not reduce the longer-term probability of labor force participation. Indeed, never-married women who had an early birth have an especially high probability of being employed (Haggstrom et al., 1981). But because employment is negatively correlated with having a young child, teenage mothers are unlikely to work in the years immediately after giving birth. Lack of earlier job experience and limited educational background appear to combine so that women who were teenage mothers are found in poorer-paying jobs.

Yet there is considerable research suggesting that delivering a baby as a teenager per se is not the direct and inevitable cause of the many problems outlined above. Rather, the pregnancy and delivery lead many mothers to make other choices that do cause problems later on. A key one is the decision to leave school. Numerous studies document a strong relationship between school dropout, reduced earnings, and welfare status (Feldstein and Ellwood, 1982; Polit, 1986; Brindis and Jeremy, 1988). In other words, being a teenage mother does not necessarily lead a young mother to a life of poverty, welfare, and several subsequent pregnancies. But what may lead her there are the often poorly considered, hasty, or uninformed decisions that follow in its wake.

School Programs

As social acceptance of unwed pregnancy increased, growing numbers of pregnant young women began to appear on the streets of their own communities and in schools in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Although many school districts chose to ignore this trend, some did respond. The programs that were developed in these early years were based on increasingly outmoded notions that unwed pregnancy was an embarrassment that could be fairly rapidly resolved through relinquishment for adoption. This orientation led programs to focus on promoting continuity of education during pregnancy and providing a supportive atmosphere in which to endure the short-lived crisis an early pregnancy precipitated. Programs generally isolated pregnant students from their nonpregnant peers to reduce community objections to serving this population. Programs tended to be time-limited, focusing their resources on the period of visible pregnancy, often ending very abruptly after delivery. Program planners viewed this short period as the time of greatest crisis, when young girls were most likely to need counseling and support.

As greater numbers of pregnant students began to keep and raise their babies, program content shifted to some degree: In particular, parenting education became a more important focus. The goal of parenting education efforts was to impart to young mothers some understanding of their babies' needs and some parenting skills. But program structure and underlying assumptions remained largely the same: Pregnancy was the time of greatest stress, thus programs should continue to focus limited resources on this period. Some recognition that many enrollees were keeping their babies was evidenced in new parenting curricula. But little attention was paid to the growing reality that many if not most of these young mothers would be the sole support of their babies. The same factors that caused vocational education to focus on boys rather than girls played out in special programs for pregnant students. In these short-term, crisis-oriented programs, impending motherhood and the need to care for an infant made career planning and vocational education at best peripheral concerns.

Work Experience and Training

In recent years, societal notions about women's relationship to work have changed substantially. At least some of this change has reflected changes in middle class women's behavior. As growing numbers of women, and particularly married, middle class women with young children, have entered the workforce, women's economic role has changed and expanded (e.g., National Commission on Children, 1989; Couch et al., 1988). These changes have been most dramatic with regard to mothers of young children: Recent data indicate that the majority of women with children under age six are currently working (Current Population Survey, 1990). Growing evidence of the marginal economic status of families headed by single mothers, and the high cost of providing welfare benefits to these families (Hayes, 1987; Children's Defense Fund, 1987), have combined with these demographic shifts to make vocational education for female students and young women appear more salient and more legitimate.

These changes have occurred at a time marked by growing concern about sex discrimination and gender equity in school programs. Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendments mandated that institutions receiving federal funds could not discriminate on the basis of gender in the allocation of resources or in access to programs and services. Although most commonly associated with athletics, Title IX had important implications for teenage mothers. It clarified that a pregnant student has the same rights and responsibilities as any other student; it specifically prohibited expulsion or exclusion of pregnant students from any programs, courses, or extracurricular activities. It affirmed the right of pregnant students to remain in regular school programs throughout pregnancy and after delivery. The Women's Education Equity Act of 1974 provided funding for projects to advance the education of women. This act specifically called for expansion and improvement of programs for female students in vocational and career education.

These demographic and legal changes have cast vocational education for female students in a new light. Federal funding, more open adolescent parenting, and more widespread concerns about gender equity in education have led to efforts to join vocational education and teen parenting programs.

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

From their inception, vocational education programs were expected to enhance both societal and individual economic gains. Society would benefit by creating an accessible pool of skilled workers prepared to maximize production, profits, and consumer purchasing power. Individuals would benefit from the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that would enable them to succeed in the labor force (Oakes, 1986a).

A number of noneconomic claims were also made for vocational education. Some believed that manual experience would benefit all students (Oakes, 1986a; Resnick, 1987) by providing multiple ways of understanding the world. Many saw vocational education as a carrot for retaining and engaging less able or academically oriented students. Vocational education would keep students in school; skills training would improve the chances that poor youth would gain the ability to earn a decent living. A vocational education track would also allow high schools to retain their subject-centered structure (Stern et al., 1985) and still provide educational opportunities for those less academically inclined.

Over time, the place and stature of vocational education in secondary schools have changed. As Oakes (1986b) notes, vocational education now exists as a "knee-jerk antonym" for academic education; vocational education represents the lowest rung on the curriculum ladder (Oakes, 1986b). National studies have consistently shown that vocational students tend to come from lower-income families and to score lower on achievement tests than other high school students (Oakes, 1983; Meyer, 1981).

Considerable evidence points to substantial gender segregation in specific vocational education courses. Males in the High School and Beyond dataset analyzed by NAVE (1988) were far more likely to enroll in introductory industrial and agricultural classes, and in all trade and industrial subjects. Female vocational education students were most likely to be found in consumer and homemaking education courses, in business support, health, and occupational home economics.

The kinds of vocational education classes in which female students enroll do not often lead to high-paying jobs. Stern et al. (1985) found that California secondary students who had completed programs in distributive education, accounting and computer, general secretarial, and machining and metals were more likely to be employed a year later than students who completed nurse's aide and child care training programs. The highest hourly wages were reported by those who had completed programs in agriculture, distributive education, auto mechanics, and machining and metals. Those students enrolled in the most traditionally female programs—nurse's aide and child care—reported both the lowest rates of employment and the lowest expected hourly wages.

Gender-based enrollment patterns and their implications for employability and economic independence for women have led policymakers and educators to focus on issues of access to high-quality and gender-nontraditional vocational education for female students. This issue is complex. Although formal policies that prohibit open enrollments are no longer legal (under Title IX), the goal of equal access can be undermined in many ways, often unintentionally. A lack of effort to affirmatively promote the enrollment of female students in nontraditional vocational education programs permits unenlightened personal preferences and increasingly outdated societal norms to influence the choices that female students make. Moreover, certain groups of female students, most notably pregnant and parenting students, may need unequal treatment to insure equal access to some vocational education opportunities. For example, teen mothers may be unable to succeed in programs that have strict attendance requirements because of the demands of a baby (McGee, 1988a). Many teen mothers may be effectively excluded from programs that lack any provision for child care if they are unable to secure such care themselves. Or, they may be less inclined to take advantage of vocational training if it is offered off-site, away from the child care center.

The goal of equal, unrestricted access to high-quality vocational education has been consistently emphasized in federal legislation. Most recently, the Carl Perkins Vocational Education Act of 1984, discussed below, has as one of its purposes reduction of the limiting effects of sex role stereotyping in occupations, job skills, levels of competency, and careers.

Vocational education exists in a larger secondary school context, which has itself undergone substantial changes in recent years. Of perhaps most relevance to vocational education has been the academic reform movement, a response to concerns about the declining educational preparation and skills of high school graduates. In response to calls for reform, graduation requirements have been increased in many subjects. Typically, students are now required to take additional units in core or academic courses to graduate. Minimum competency examinations and the introduction of advanced diplomas or special certificates for additional academic coursework are also common. As the NAVE (1988) report indicates, these reforms create additional and competing demands on students' time. These demands are most likely to affect students who are not college-oriented, as the college-bound in most cases were planning to take a large number of academic courses before the reforms. Vocational education students who have to add academic courses to their schedules must sacrifice other courses to do so. Declining enrollments in vocational education courses suggest that it is frequently these courses that are sacrificed. Competency exams may further affect vocational education students, who are drawn disproportionately from the ranks of lower-achieving students. To pass these exams, vocational education students may find themselves taking more remedial classes. In addition, specialized academic diplomas may keep college-bound students, who might have taken an additonal vocational education course or two, more involved with academic coursework. These factors have all devolved to reduce enrollments in vocational education more than in other programs of study (e.g., Franz et al., 1987, Guthrie et al., 1987).

Vocational education instructors have attempted to stem these disproportionate enrollment declines in several ways. Some research suggests that staff in comprehensive high schools are increasingly reluctant to refer vocational education students to Regional Occupational Centers, despite evidence that these centers provide superior vocational education programming (Stern et al., 1985). Some instructors have succeeded in turning vocational classes into academic offerings, e.g., redefining cosmetology as "applied chemistry," or drafting and mechanics as "applied math." Growing numbers of special education students appear to be enrolling in vocational education courses (NAVE, 1988), and in at least one state, vocational technical centers have dropout recruiters who attempt to enroll dropouts in vocational technical programs. There are no data concerning whether pregnant and parenting teenagers as a group are being actively recruited to raise enrollment figures.

The effect of vocational education on dropout prevention appears small but slightly positive. Mertens (1982), using data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth Labor Market Experience, found that the vocational education curriculum does slightly increase retention rates in high school. A study by Lotto (1982) of programs that were successful in reducing dropout rates found that these programs were characterized not only by vocational education but by instruction in basic skills, career counseling, and additional support services. These latter findings suggest that a more comprehensive approach to vocational education may increase its effects on enrollees. Such integrated approaches to education and life skills are not uncommon in programs that serve pregnant and parenting students.

It is against this background of established need among pregnant and parenting students, gender inequality in the delivery of vocational education services, and the reality of a limited but measurable effect of vocational education training that we sought in this study to understand how and in what ways vocational education is currently offered and used by pregnant and parenting students in secondary schools.

LEGAL CONTEXT

The Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act, Public Law 98-524, passed in 1984, was in effect during our study.[1] It codified concerns about equal access to vocational education for women, and particularly single mothers, through its set-asides for single parents and for those seeking to enter gender-nontraditional occupations. Several provisions of the act were of particular significance for pregnant and parenting teens. First, Title I, which governs state administrative structures for vocational education, required that a full-time staff person be appointed to coordinate both the state vocational education sex equity program *and* the state vocational education program for single parents and homemakers.[2] It thus explicitly linked concerns about eliminating sex bias and increasing women's participation in nontraditional occupations with concerns about increasing opportunities for single parents. This linkage was also reflected in the programmatic provisions of the statute.

Title II of the act governed basic state grants for vocational education. It required that each state use a specific proportion of the federal basic grant funds to "meet the special needs of and to enhance the participation" of each of six target groups.[3] Two of these target groups are especially relevant for those concerned with pregnant and parenting programs: "individuals who are single parents or homemakers" and "individuals who participate in programs designed to eliminate sex bias and stereotyping in vocational education. . . ."[4] Eight and a half percent of the basic grant funds were set aside for single parents and homemakers ("single parent money") and 3-1/2 percent were set aside for individuals participating in programs designed to eliminate sex bias and stereotyping ("sex bias money").[5] A third set-aside, for the disadvantaged (22 percent), may also be a potential source of funding for pregnant and parenting teenagers.[6] For fiscal year 1988, single parent money was also available for single pregnant women.[7]

---

[1] For this reason, we focus on that act in our discussion. In 1990, it was restructured and renamed the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act. Changes relevant to teen parents in the reauthorization are discussed below.

[2] 20 U.S.C. 2321(b). Note that the act applies to single parents who may or may not be teenagers.

[3] 20 U.S.C. 2331(b).

[4] 20 U.S.C. 2331(b) (3) and (5).

[5] 20 U.S.C. 2332(a) (4) and (5).

Single parent money may be used for vocational education services, including expansion of vocational education programs, that will provide single parents with *marketable skills*, for related support services, and for outreach to inform single parents of the availability of vocational education and related support services. An important feature to note is that the single parent funds may be used to "make vocational education and training more accessible to single parents and homemakers by assisting them with child care or transportation services or by organizing and scheduling the programs so that such programs are more accessible. . . ."[8] Sex bias money was also available for child care, transportation, and other support services, as well as for direct programs to eliminate sex bias and stereotyping in vocational education. The statute also specifically provided for use of sex bias funds for "vocational education programs, services, and activities for girls and women, aged 14 through 25, designed to enable the participants to support themselves and their families. . . ."[9]

Title II also provided for use of federal funds for vocational education program improvement, innovation, and expansion. One of 24 approved uses listed in the statute was "day care services for children of students in secondary and post-secondary vocational education programs. . . ."[10] It also permitted states to target single heads of household who are out of school for a range of services, including special student stipends to meet "acute economic needs which cannot be met under work-study programs. . . ."[11]

Title III of the act governed special programs and provided for consumer and homemaking education grants. These grants were to be used for a range of instructional topics, including child development and parenting education, and a range of activities, including outreach to underserved populations, and elimination of sex bias and stereotyping.[12]

By providing special monies for designated groups of women (single parents, displaced homemakers), requiring that each state coordinate its sex equity and single parent programs, emphasizing the importance of marketable skills, and recognizing the need for child care, transportation, and special scheduling of classes, the act attempted to overcome some of the problems of access and equity that women, and especially mothers, have faced in their attempts to acquire the training necessary to get and hold well-paying jobs.

The act was reauthorized and amended in 1990.[13] Some of the amendments were effective September 25, 1990; the rest were effective July 1, 1991. Although the amendments had not been implemented during our study, and their effect is not clear at this writing, they do have potential effects on access to vocational education for pregnant and parenting teens. There are several pertinent changes in the act. First, federal monies may be used only for programs that provide equal access to "special populations," including the disadvantaged and individuals who participate in programs designed to eliminate sex bias. Unfortunately, the definition of "special populations" does not explicitly include single parents or pregnant women. Although most pregnant and parenting teens will be eligible as "disadvantaged" persons, the failure to specifically list single parents and pregnant women may make it less likely that programs will address their needs. Unless there is particular awareness on the part of school districts, or extensive local advocacy, teen parents are likely to be overlooked. This is particularly disturbing, since school districts are required to adapt their programs to meet the needs of special populations; indeed, the bulk of Perkins Act funds will be governed by the special population provisions. As discussed below, in the reauthorization, set-asides are reduced and represent a small portion of the overall funds.

---

[6] 20 U.S.C. 2331(b) (2) and 2332(a) (2).
[7] 20 U.S.C. 2332(b).
[8] 20 U.S.C. 2331(f).
[9] 20 U.S.C. 2331(g).
[10] 20 U.S.C. 2341(a) (190).
[11] 20 U.S.C. 2341(a) (17).
[12] 20 U.S.C. 2361 and 2362.
[13] Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act Amendments of 1990, Public Law 101-392.

According to Congressional staff, there was no intent to exclude single parents from the definition of special populations in the reauthorization. A technical amendment would correct the exclusion and make it more likely that pregnant and parenting teens would benefit from the legislation.[14]

Second, pregnant women are now clearly included in the eligible population for single parent programs, which was unclear in the earlier legislation, and funds may be used for teen pregnancy prevention. Third, the single parent programs specifically include secondary as well as post-secondary programs. Fourth, state homemaker programs must include vocational and pre-vocational components, including comprehensive career guidance and counseling. Fifth, the powers of the state sex equity coordinators are more fully spelled out.

The total percentage of funds set aside for single parent and sex equity programs is reduced by 2 percent; the ultimate effect on funding levels of this percentage reduction is unclear, since the authorization figures are substantially higher than in the past. The actual dollar levels will depend on appropriations. All other set-asides were eliminated, in favor of detailed provisions strengthening access for special populations to basic vocational education programs. Single parent and sex equity funds continue to be distributed on a competitive basis, since the dollar amounts are still quite small. The basic program funds will now be distributed to local school systems through a formula that is partly based on poverty rates. There is a new provision for minimum grant sizes for basic grants; there is no such provision for single parent or sex equity grants. The amendments also require participatory planning and complaint procedures and regular review on local, state, and federal levels to determine whether equal access is being achieved and to identify and eliminate barriers to participation.[15]

CURRENT EMPHASES

In recent years, women's workforce behavior, their enrollments in training programs, and provisions in law have combined to legitimize vocational education among women and girls and to increase awareness of the need for their equal access to it. These same forces have converged, along with a strong emphasis in the Reagan era on reducing the costs of social welfare programs, to promote welfare reform efforts focused on making recipients work.[16] The Family Support Act of 1988[17] requires each state to develop a Job Opportunities and Basic Skills (JOBS) program designed to promote this end. States are given wide latitude in developing their programs, which may range from job search requirements to vocational skills training, on-the-job experience, and basic skills training. School-age parents receive special attention in this legislation.

---

[14] No such amendment was under way at this writing.

[15] The amendments also require consultation and cooperation between different programs and different agencies engaged in vocational training, e.g., Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA), However, it is clear that in designing these requirements, the lawmakers thought of JOBS (the new welfare employment and training program, examined in Sec. 5) as an *adult* program. Coordination with JOBS is required only in the context of adult and postsecondary programs.

To date, the effects of the Family Support Act are largely unknown. The effects on pregnant and parenting teens could be positive if sufficient resources and appropriate requirements are included in JOBS programs, e.g., more child care provided. Or, the effects could be negative if resources are limited and participation requirements restrictive; e.g., school attendance requirements that permit no unexcused absences and do not excuse an absence to look after a sick baby. In our work in the last year of this project, we focused on these effects, which are described in Sec. 5.

STUDY OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this study was to examine the provision of vocational education opportunities to two groups of pregnant and parenting teenagers: those who remain in school and enroll in special school-based or school-sponsored programs for pregnant and parenting students and those who enroll at some point in a community-based program that serves pregnant and parenting teens. The study aimed to examine the range of vocational education opportunities offered within the context of these programs and how these opportunities mesh with program goals. Since availability and use are not isomorphic, particularly for pregnant and parenting students, who frequently lack the experience or assertiveness to seize upon opportunities from which they are not specifically excluded (Polit, 1986; Zellman, 1981), we examined issues surrounding access and use of vocational education opportunities as well.

Because school and district policies concerning absences and requirements are likely to play a role in how, when, and why pregnant and parenting students avail themselves of vocational education, we also examined the policy context in the schools and districts included in our study.

In the first year of our study, we conducted telephone interviews in 49 representative school districts located in seven nationally representative states to explore district policies and procedures that facilitate or inhibit vocational education for teen mothers and the availability of special programs.

During the project's second year, we made site visits to 11 programs for pregnant and parenting students that were sponsored by schools or to which schools made a major contribution. These 11 programs were located in five of our study states. During these site visits we examined vocational education opportunities, access, and use in these special programs by interviewing special program staff, vocational educators, and teen mothers. In the third and final year of our project, we visited three community-based programs serving teen mothers. These visits were designed to clarify the extent to which school context bears on the availability and use of vocational education opportunities and the degree to which community-based programs offer a different approach to vocational education.

---

[16] There is substantial evidence that many welfare recipients prefer to work and are prevented from doing so by structural problems in the economy and barriers to employment rather than by lack of motivation. Some evidence for this may be found in the large numbers of AFDC recipients who chose to keep their low-paying jobs and lose their welfare benefits when the financial incentives for employment (the allowable deductions from earned income in calculating AFDC eligibility and benefits) were drastically decreased during the 1980s (Miller, 1990; Block et al., 1987).

[17] Family Support Act of 1988, Public Law 100-485.

Finally, we analyzed the current and anticipated effects of the Family Support Act of 1988 on programs for pregnant and parenting teens. Although the goals of the Family Support Act and those of most programs for pregnant and parenting teens include increased earning capacity, little was known about how the Family Support Act would facilitate these goals in the context of existing teen pregnancy and parenting programs.

These varied efforts, described in more detail below, were oriented toward six specific objectives:

1. To explore vocational education in the context of secondary school programs for pregnant and parenting high school and middle school students. To what extent and in what form does vocational education exist within these special programs? To what degree does the school context support the delivery of vocational education?
2. To examine the degree of access to vocational education available to pregnant and parenting students in secondary schools. To what extent have the unique problems and needs of teenage mothers (e.g., child care) been addressed in attempts to assure truly equal access to these opportunities?
3. To examine the attitudinal context in which pregnant and parenting students seek and enroll in vocational education. How committed are those who work most closely with pregnant and parenting students to promoting vocational education for them? How committed are teen mothers to vocational education?
4. To compare vocational education opportunities and access in special school programs with such opportunities and access in community-based programs.
5. To identify programs or efforts that appear to facilitate the acquisition of job-related skills among pregnant and parenting teenagers and increase their immediate or future employability.
6. To analyze the effects to date of the Family Support Act on teenage parents and on the programs that serve them.

METHODS

To our knowledge, no studies have focused on the intersection of vocational education and teenage pregnancy and parenting. Moreover, virtually no school districts identify teen parents as such, which makes rigorous evaluations of teen parent programs extremely difficult.[18] Thus, our study necessarily has an exploratory flavor. We combine in our study exploratory telephone interviews around the country, semistructured telephone interviews in seven nationally representative states and seven representative school districts within each of these states, site visits to a small number of purposively sampled school- and community-based programs, and follow-up telephone interviews about the Family Support Act. This report presents results from each study component; study methods for each component are described below.

---

[18] Many districts claim that such identification would violate the confidentiality of teen parents. Failure to track teen parents is consistent with a lack of effort to track dropouts more generally.

Exploratory Phone Interviews

In the initial phase of the study, RAND staff with backgrounds in education, teen pregnancy, and policy research received detailed training about vocational education, teen pregnancy, and study goals. They then conducted telephone interviews with respondents across the country about pregnant and parenting students and vocational education. These individuals were contacted because of their involvement with research on pregnant and parenting students or vocational education, their positions as state or federal policymakers concerned with the provision of services to pregnant and parenting or vocational students, their role as advocates for pregnant and parenting students, or their involvement in delivering services to these groups, either within or outside of schools. We asked these individuals about the salience of vocational education for teen mothers, about major policy issues and research initiatives in this area, and about local community and school district efforts to develop innovative approaches to job-skills training for teen mothers. These first respondents in turn directed us to other respondents across the country. We interviewed a total of 164 people during this phase of the study. They included 26 state policymakers, 38 advocates, 18 researchers, 9 staff of local pregnancy and parenting programs, 54 other school staff, 13 community-based service providers, and 6 other respondents.

Semistructured Telephone Interviews

To produce school district-level data that could be generalized to the nation as a whole, we used stratified random sampling techniques to select the seven states and 49 local education agencies (LEAs) in which we would interview. The seven states were selected using the following procedures:

1. We divided the country into three contiguous regions—West/Northern Plains, East/Midwest, and South/Border—that were as internally homogeneous as possible with regard to birth rates to women under age 20. States that bordered more than one potential "mega-region" were included in the region with an aggregate teen birth rate most similar to its own.
2. Within the West/Northern Plains and South/Border "mega-regions," we created two sets of states on the basis of population—big states with populations over 9 million, and the others. Within the East/Midwest region, we created three sets of states; Midwest states with populations over 9 million, Eastern states with populations over 9 million, and all others. The result was seven homogeneous regions, each of which included 30–40 million people. The set of small western states included 13 states but only 17 million people.
3. We selected one state at random from each of the seven sets of states. Within each region, the probability of selection was proportional to population. All selected states agreed to participate.[19]
4. Within selected states, we arrayed school districts in terms of secondary enrollment, then districts were divided into septiles, so that the first group accounted for one-seventh of secondary enrollment, the second group for an additional one-seventh, etc. Districts with fewer than 100 secondary school students were deleted from consideration. From each selected state we sampled seven school districts at random, one from each septile. These districts were selected with probability proportional to the number of secondary school students. In some cases, a

---

[19] States were promised anonymity as a condition of participation.

single district enrolled one-seventh or more of the secondary school students in the state. In these instances, the district was selected with certainty.

The resulting sample of states and districts provides a good mix of states, and a group of school districts that varies in terms of enrollments, ethnic distribution, and urban-rural location.

In each district included in our sample, interviewers selected up to two pregnant and parenting programs in which to interview directly. In two districts, no program was available in which to interview, and in 23 additional districts just one program existed and interviews were completed. In the 24 remaining districts, two programs were selected from among those available. These selections were made on the basis of two criteria. First, when there were pregnant and parenting programs of different types in a district, interviewers selected programs that represented different types. Second, programs that focused more directly on vocational education were selected over those that appeared to lack this focus, as we wanted to ensure that there were sufficient programs in the sample with a vocational education emphasis. These selections resulted in interviews in a total of 71 programs in 47 districts.[20] Interviews were conducted with a total of 327 LEA-based respondents in this phase of the study. Respondents included 61 staff of pregnant and parenting programs, including program heads, teachers, and counselors; 14 building principals; 2 teachers; 30 school counselors; 15 school nurses; 18 vocational educators; 82 district-level administrators; 60 other district staff; 30 community people; and 15 others.

These interviews focused on formal and informal district policies concerning participation by teen mothers in educational programs, access to vocational education by teen mothers, and the opportunities provided by special programs targeted to them.

In addition, in this phase of the study we conducted a total of 62 semistructured telephone interviews at the state level in selected states. These interviews included vocational education and pregnancy staff, state legislators and their staff, advocates, and other policymakers in related areas, e.g., State Department of Labor. These interviews focused on state legislation and policy relevant to the provision of services to teen mothers, the extent of state-level involvement in local district programs, and the level of state concern about the provision of vocational education to teen mothers.

Interview findings were coded to permit statistical analysis of interview data. More qualitative data derived from interviews were included on these forms as well.

Selection of Teen Parent Programs for Site Visits

Programs to be considered for site visits were identified from within seven states that had been included in an earlier telephone survey.[21] State- and local-level educators and policymakers were queried about school-based, school-sponsored, and community-based programs that they regarded as unusually innovative or effective either in terms of providing pregnant or parenting teens a range of services or in terms of their outcomes. Telephone interviews in school districts produced additional nominations. Nominated programs ranged along a continuum of school involvement, with some programs entirely school-sponsored and run, some a mix of school and community sponsorship, and some, on the other end of the continuum, entirely independent of the schools.

---

[20] Because these programs were not selected randomly, data concerning program distribution, components, and goals cannot be generalized to the universe of school districts or programs.

[21] To produce data from the telephone survey that could be generalized to the nation as a whole, we used stratified random sampling techniques to select the states.

Two site visit samples were developed. The first included 11 programs based in or heavily supported by schools. The second sample included three community-based programs with little or no school involvement. Each sample is described below.

Sample 1: School-Based and School-Sponsored Programs

This sample includes both "pure" school programs, in which the program is located on school property and is funded largely or totally by the schools, and programs that were located at some distance along the school-community continuum from the "pure" school form. In these latter programs, the schools and community each play a major role.

Two conditions had to be met to consider programs eligible to be included in this sample. First, programs had to be sponsored by the schools or have major, formal school involvement. In all selected programs, program enrollees had to be officially enrolled in school.[22]

Second, the programs had to devote time and resources to vocational education, which could range from the provision of job-skills training to career information or counseling. As discussed below, we attempted to ensure some variation in the ways in which vocational education was provided.

Given the exploratory nature of the study, a statistical sampling procedure was ruled out. Instead, each sample was purposive and was designed to maximize both the breadth of our results and the amount we could learn from each site.

In selecting our school-based programs from among those eligible, we followed the diversity strategy described by Murphy (1980). First, we identified important dimensions along which the programs varied. Our earlier telephone survey of states and school districts was most helpful in identifying two important dimensions: program model and the kinds of vocational education opportunities available.

Program model was defined by the amount of regular contact between program enrollees and their nonparenting peers. Isolated comprehensive programs where enrollees have no regular contact with other students marked one extreme of this dimension. At the other extreme were programs in which pregnant and parenting students spent all or nearly all their time with nonparenting students, as no formal teen parent program existed.

The second dimension described programs in terms of the kind of vocational opportunities that were available to program enrollees. Programs were sorted into two categories: those that provided pre-training experiences, such as work socialization, career counseling, or opportunities to learn more about the world of work, including nontraditional careers, and those in which enrollees had access to specific workforce-oriented vocational skills training.

Then, we created a matrix based on these two dimensions. We identified 11 programs that fell into different cells of this matrix, as shown in Table 1.1. Seven of these programs were "pure" school programs and four involved school-community cooperation.

---

[22] Participants could be regular school enrollees or enrolled as adult education students.

Table 1.1

Vocational Education Opportunities Available to Program Enrollees in School-Sponsored Programs

Program Model	Specific Job-Skills Training and Guidance	Work Socialization or Guidance Only
Comprehensive—all time spent with teen parents	3 programs	3 programs
Most time spent with teen parents only	2 programs	
Most time spent mainstreamed	2 programs	
Virtually all time spent mainstreamed (no formal program)	1 "program"	

NOTE: Visited programs were promised anonymity.

Sample 2: Community Programs

In selecting community-based programs, we wanted to find programs that had little or no school involvement. This presented more of a challenge than we had imagined: Virtually every community-based program contained a large educational component, many of which were funded by the schools. Even those programs initially designed to supplement or follow on existing educational programs or services found themselves compelled to offer educational services within the program because of the limited educational skills and achievements of program enrollees. What distinguished these programs from the school-sponsored programs, then, was not the absence of educational services but the programs' independence from the schools in their provision of them.

To be considered for selection into the community program sample, a community program had to:

1. Represent a "pure form" of community program. Program administration had to be the responsibility of the community agency or the program, the program had to be housed in the community, and there could be only minimal or no school district involvement in program planning, implementation, or operations.
2. Serve dropouts.
3. Serve at least some teen parents who were school-aged, and thus replace school for at least some enrollees.
4. Provide a range of services to program enrollees.
5. Have made a major commitment to the provision of vocational education, job training, job counseling, or job placement.
6. Be located in one of the states originally sampled for the study.

Given the very small number of community-based programs to be selected, we could not select these programs with even the rigor employed in selecting the school-based ones. We did, however, attempt to ensure that taken together, the three "pure" community programs and the four previously selected school/community ones provided a range of vocational education opportunities to program enrollees. Among the seven programs that include a significant community role, five indicated that they provide specific job skills, training, and guidance, and two programs provide work socialization or guidance only.

In choosing from among both school-based and community programs that met our selection criteria, we retained those that appeared to be unusually effective in providing services and meeting their own goals. Defining and selecting these programs was hindered by the paucity of outcome data on which we could rely; few pregnant and parenting adolescent programs have ongoing evaluation components (Stahler and DuCette, 1991). Many programs that claimed to collect outcome data did so only informally, relying on young mothers to return to the program and report on their successes. In a few programs, more rigorous data collection efforts had begun, but in each of these programs, the effort had started recently, and thus no post-program outcomes were available. In two school-based programs, however, good outcome evaluations were available because they were required by outside funders. The fact of an outcome evaluation was an indication that these programs were more focused on outcomes than most; the results of these evaluations revealed that these programs were doing quite well in retaining enrollees and improving their longer-term outcomes. We used these data, combined with information about program model and services, as a basis for selecting these two programs for site visits.

We selected from among the remaining programs those that appeared to most closely meet a set of process criteria that included:

- Quality of resources available to the program,
- Level of community support,
- Extent and quality of services provided,
- Commitment of staff to program and program participants, and
- Salience of and commitment to vocational education and eventual success in the workforce.

FIELDWORK

RAND staff members visited selected programs for one to five days, depending on program characteristics and sponsorship. A total of 170 adult respondents were interviewed on-site. These interviews included 6 superintendents and assistant superintendents; 9 district-level supervisors of special programs; 7 principals; 3 vocational education coordinators; 9 counselors; 6 school nurses and social workers; 7 vocational education instructors; 5 other teachers; 24 teen parent program directors and staff; 1 community-based vocational education provider; 7 community agency personnel (including Jobs Training Partnership Act (JTPA), Private Industry Council (PIC), juvenile court, and welfare agency staff); 1 community teen parent advocate; and 1 newspaper reporter.

Forty-four teen parents were also interviewed. They varied in age from 14 to 21. Because they were selected for interviews by teen parent program staff, all but two were enrolled in school at the time of the interview—six in regular school and 36 in teen parent programs.[23] The former two had graduated the previous year. Of the 44 teen parents, 28 were white, seven were black, six were Hispanic, and three were of mixed ethnicity.[24] Most (84 percent) teen parents were unmarried, although a number of these had concrete marriage plans. Two thirds (66 percent) lived with their parent or parents; the married teens lived with their husband, and the remainder lived with other relatives or with their boyfriends.

---

[23] Although program staff tried to recruit "representative" teen parents who varied in age and other attributes, the teen parent sample cannot be viewed as more than a convenience sample.

Field staff used open-ended field interview guides to conduct interviews, and asked questions that tapped each respondent's unique expertise and perspective. On average, interviews lasted one hour. Interviews with adult respondents focused on the goals and operations of the teen parent program, the provision of vocational education, and the vocational opportunities available to teen parents, both within and outside the program. Interviews with teenagers focused on career planning and goals, school career decisionmaking, and vocational education experiences.

At the conclusion of the fieldwork, a case study was written for each program. A detailed outline was used in writing case studies to ensure that reports contained comparable information that allowed for comparisons across programs.

SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE ANALYSIS

This report presents a descriptive summary and a synthesis of data collected in telephone interviews and in the course of site visits. The findings presented here are those that appear most consistently and compellingly in the data, although findings unique to a particular program or program type are often noted as such.

Three limitations of the analysis should be made explicit. First, since our sample of programs was not representative, we cannot presume to generalize our findings to all programs or school districts. Second, we have made no attempt to give equal weight to the data that we gathered. As we anticipated, some of the "exemplary" programs proved not to be so upon close examination. Moreover, some programs revealed more about the organization and delivery of vocational education to pregnant and parenting students. Third, our analyses mirror the reality of teen parent programs in focusing exclusively on teen *mothers*. Although most teen parent programs are formally available to teen fathers, they almost never participate.[25]

ORGANIZATION OF THE REPORT

Section 2 explores school district policies relevant to pregnant and parenting students in the school districts included in our study. It also describes the teen parent programs these districts operate. Section 3 describes the availability and use of vocational education in these programs. Section 4 discusses the community programs we visited, comparing the vocational education opportunities and use we found in these programs to those available in the school-sponsored ones. Section 5 presents our analysis of the likely effects of the Family Support Act on teen parents and on the programs that serve them. Section 6 synthesizes study findings in its discussion of underlying issues and dilemmas in providing vocational education to young mothers.

---

[24] The disproportionate number of white interviewees reflects our efforts to include programs in suburban and rural areas as well as those in large cities; the former programs had predominantly white enrollments.

[25] According to program staff, teen fathers sometimes are discouraged from participation by teen mothers who are discomfited by their presence. Many have not accepted the father role and see no point in becoming involved. All-female enrollments may serve to discourage participation as well.

2. DISTRICT POLICIES AND PROGRAMS FOR PREGNANT AND PARENTING STUDENTS[1]

DISTRICT POLICIES AND PRACTICES[2]

Most of the districts in our sample of 49 had in some way formally recognized the special needs of pregnant and parenting students, as shown in Table 2.1. For example, one district had established a task force on teenage pregnancy and parenting in the schools. Several districts had established dropout prevention programs that focused largely on pregnant and parenting students. In another district, a new, full-time, at-risk coordinator position was established. A key responsibility of this person was to conduct a needs assessment for pregnant and parenting students. In several districts, support was evidenced in the provision of transportation to pregnant and parenting students from their comprehensive high schools to a special center.

In districts without any formal policy recognizing the needs of pregnant and parenting students, staff lamented its absence. In one small district, the high school counselor noted that he and the teachers try to work out flextime arrangements for pregnant and parenting students, but are unable to provide any services directly because of the lack of any district policy or support. When asked what he viewed as the most sorely needed improvement in the school situation for pregnant and parenting students, this counselor stressed the need to establish *some* district policy which would allow staff to respond to pregnant and parenting students' needs. In another district without a formal policy, high school staff have initiated informal support groups for pregnant and parenting students but identify the lack of formal policy and resources as a major barrier to services.

A little over half (56 percent) of the districts we surveyed permit pregnant and parenting students to receive high school credit for enrollment in adult community education courses, a more liberal policy than one allowing only GED credit. Often, pregnant and parenting students (and particularly older ones) find such enrollments to be easier to accomplish than regular high school classes because most adult community education courses are offered in the evening.

Table 2.1

Prevalence of District-Level Policies Relevant to Pregnant and Parenting Students

	Prevalence	
Policy	Percent	No.[a]
Formal recognition of teen parent problems and needs	71	47
Teen parents get high school credit for adult/community coursework	56	32
Person responsible for teen parents formally designated	55	49
Nonmedical homebound instruction available to teen parents	43	44

[a] Number may be less than 49 because of missing data.

---

[1] The data reported in this section are drawn from both the telephone survey in 49 districts and from site visits to 11 teen parent programs.

[2] Data in this section were collected on the phone.

Just over half of the districts we surveyed had designated a person at the district level to be formally responsible for pregnant and parenting students. The designation of formal responsibility for pregnant students is related to district enrollment, with a formally designated person in every one of the largest twelve districts in the sample. Such a person was rare in the twelve smallest ones. When this position exists, its incumbent typically has other responsibilities besides pregnant and parenting students, e.g., director of pupil services. In some districts, several people have part-time responsibility for pregnant and parenting students and usually work together in planning and overseeing the pregnant and parenting program. In districts where no one is formally responsible for pregnant and parenting students, school nurses and guidance counselors often assume such responsibility informally. Because of the press of other responsibilities, their involvement is usually limited to referrals to outside agencies.

As shown in Table 2.1, just under half (43 percent) of the districts in our sample extend homebound instruction in the absence of medical indication to pregnant and parenting students; most districts make this service available if a doctor certifies that the student is unable to attend school.[3] Districts that do not provide homebound instruction cited a complicated certification process or high costs as reasons for its unavailability. In several such districts, a guidance counselor phones with homework assignments.

Our respondents often noted that teen parents prefer to be in school with their friends rather than on homebound instruction, although in more than one district homebound education was the service of choice for middle school-aged mothers. Respondents in districts with teen parent programs contrasted the limited educational focus of homebound instruction with the broader, more supportive goals of the pregnant and parenting student program and strongly advocated the latter.

It appears that nonmedically indicated homebound instruction may be inconsistent with other, more "modern" approaches to helping pregnant and parenting students. Our analyses revealed that nonmedically indicated homebound instruction is negatively related to other facilitative policies, such as teen pregnancy prevention efforts, and to formal recognition of pregnant and parenting students' needs. In the smallest districts, nonmedically indicated homebound instruction appears to serve as a substitute for other responses to pregnancy and parenting. It is in these districts that nonmedically indicated homebound instruction is most strongly and negatively related to other policies that may be more supportive, including use of adult community facilities ($r = -0.50$), and application for special funds for pregnant and parenting students ($r = -0.41$). Interestingly, in the smallest districts the availability of homebound instruction is also associated with the lack of a district-level person charged with responsibility for pregnant and parenting students, a relationship that does not hold across the districts taken together. It may be that in the smallest districts the lack of such a person, combined with lower numbers of pregnant and parenting students, has resulted in the continuation of an old policy and the absence of efforts to pursue new ones.

---

[3] In some states homebound education must be provided when medically indicated.

ATTENDANCE AND PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY[4]

Two policies were repeatedly identified during site visits as having the potential to negatively affect parenting students: (1) attendance policies and (2) vocational education eligibility requirements. Strict attendance policies make school involvement difficult for teen mothers, since they generally have more absences; if such absences directly threaten success, such policies may reduce their inclination to enroll in or remain in school. Similarly, strict eligibility requirements for entry into vocational education programs may create a barrier to teen parent participation.

Attendance Policies

State-level attendance policies in four of the five states in which we visited programs limit the number of excused absences a student may have and still get credit for a course. In only one of these four states were absences related to pregnancy or parenting officially excluded from the count. In the other three states, several districts had found a way around strict attendance rules by creating district-level amendments for teen parents. In these districts, district and teen parent program staff were able to ignore pregnancy-related absences that otherwise might have caused teen mothers to lose credit for completed schoolwork.

In one district without a formal program, no official amendment to the state attendance policy existed. Instead, the 90 percent attendance rule was waived unofficially if it came to a counselor's attention that a teen mother was having parenting-related attendance problems. The unofficial nature of this policy meant that teen mothers either had to ask for help with attendance, or busy counselors had to notice a teen mother's spotty attendance record and be aware of her parenting status. As with most informal policy responses to parenting students, this one caused problems. Parents were sometimes not aware of the possibility of a waiver, and counselors did not always notice the problem in a timely manner.

In four teen parent programs, staff had set attendance rules that were actually more rigorous than those for other students. In three of these programs, attendance is stressed because a key program goal is dropout prevention; staff believe that emphasizing attendance will reduce the likelihood of dropout. In the fourth program, strict attendance policies are driven by the high demand for slots in the child care center. Staff in this program decided that if a teen mother does not attend regularly, her slot should be given to another mother.

Vocational courses and programs often establish stricter attendance policies than those of other programs. In some cases, these policies are designed to ensure that students accumulate the hours needed for state certification; they may also reflect vocational divisions' campaigns for increased credibility. Attendance inflexibility is also seen as a teaching tool: Many vocational education staff to whom we spoke regarded these policies as a key component of workforce socialization and an important lesson for future workers.

In three teen parent programs that we visited, program staff had worked with vocational education instructors to modify vocational education attendance policies for teen parents. In these districts, parenting-related absences from vocational education classes were excluded from absence limits. But these absences still counted against the hours needed for state certification. Local staff were unable to change these state-level policies. Most believed that as long as absences threatened certification, teen parents would be less likely to enroll in vocational education courses and programs, and would benefit less fully from them.

---

[4] Data in this section were collected during site visits.

Vocational education attendance requirements may also inhibit participation in parenting activities. In two districts that we visited, students enrolled in vocational education programs are unable to participate in counseling groups or teen parenting program activities because the vocational education classes either do not allow them time off, or any absences count against them at the point of state certification.

Eligibility Requirements

Several of the teen parent programs that we visited offer enrollees vocational education at centers providing secondary- and post-secondary-level courses. These more advanced and technical courses often have eligibility requirements such as 11th grade reading and math abilities. Students in teen parent programs frequently cannot meet these eligibility requirements because of low academic achievement.

In only one district of the three we visited that had vocational education eligibility requirements had any effort been made to help teen parents meet them. In this district, the teen parent program coordinated with a remedial education program to help teen parents pass the eligibility exam. The teen parent program had also arranged for enrollees to begin coursework in their chosen vocational field at the local voc-tech center while they were simultaneously enrolled in remedial skills classes. The new Perkins Act provisions described in Sec. 1 may help school staff to deal with this problem, since programs are required to adapt to meet the needs of special populations.[5]

PREGNANT AND PARENTING PROGRAM AVAILABILITY[6]

In each of our sampled districts, the telephone interviewer sought to determine the total number of programs for pregnant and parenting students currently operating in the district or in the school community. Interviewers coded programs into three categories based on their location and sponsor. The categories included: (1) comprehensive, separate site programs in which pregnant and parenting students interact only with other pregnant and parenting students; (2) mainstream programs in which pregnant and parenting students spend some part of their time with nonparenting students; and (3) programs sponsored by an agency other than the schools, e.g., the YWCA, that include school attendance as a program component. Informal efforts to support pregnant and parenting students or those at risk for parenting were included in a fourth category, labeled "other programs."

Interviewers identified 277 school-sponsored and nonschool-sponsored programs operating in the 49 sampled districts and their school communities, as shown in Table 2.2.[7] Most of the

---

[5] As discussed in Sec. 1, it is doubtful that pregnant and parenting teens will fully benefit from these provisions, since single parents and pregnant women are not listed in the definition of special populations. Although most pregnant and parenting teens would qualify as "disadvantaged," they would be unlikely to be considered as a group in school district program planning.

[6] The next two subsections rely on data from telephone interviews.

[7] This figure underestimates the true numbers of nonschool-sponsored programs to an unknown degree, as interviewers lacked the resources to conduct exhaustive searches for all community-based programs.

Table 2.2

Programs for Pregnant and Parenting Students Identified in District-Level Interviews

Program Type	No. of Programs
Comprehensive	20
Mainstream	72
Nonschool-sponsored	99
"Other"	86
Total	277

programs fell into the nonschool-sponsored and "other programs" categories. Nonschool-sponsored programs tended to be sponsored by community agencies such as the Y or the Junior League, or by long-time providers of services to this population, such as St. Anne's and Florence Crittenden Homes. The "other programs" category was dominated by dropout prevention efforts. In most cases, these programs were targeted to all students or to "at risk" students; teen mothers were included as part of the above groups.

Just 92 comprehensive and mainstream programs were identified. These relatively low numbers reflect a tendency in LEAs to limit the number of formal teen parent programs sponsored by the district. The number of comprehensive programs never exceeded two, with most districts having just one. However, in a number of districts, several high schools offered child care services to students. The existence of school-sponsored programs was related to district size. In 12 of the 19 smallest districts (enrollments below 5,000), there was no school-sponsored program. In seven of these 12 districts, no other program served teen mothers either.

In most of the districts we visited, the formal program or programs for pregnant and parenting students constituted the district's sole programmatic response to young mothers. Although district staff recognized that many teen mothers dropped out of school, and that others chose not to enroll in the program (or the program could not accommodate all those wishing to attend), these unserved mothers were by and large ignored.

All the districts supported the teen parent program to at least some degree. In general, district-level support included provision of funds and materials to the program, acknowledgment of the program and praise for its efforts, and supervision of program administrators. Nevertheless, district financial support for the program everywhere was insufficient to meet the diverse service needs the programs felt compelled to address.

No district counted or tracked teen parents. In spite of support for a special program on the part of these districts, individual teen parents remain statistically invisible. None of the districts was able to provide us data on the incidence of pregnancy, nor had they tried to discover the extent to which pregnancy contributed to the dropout rate.

PROGRAM COMPONENTS[8]

We selected a total of 71 programs to survey in greater depth to learn about program operations and opportunities, as discussed above. Once interviews were completed and coding had begun, it became apparent that coding of the 25 "other" programs would not be meaningful, as many were not really programs at all, lacking as they often did a director, formal components, or program goals. Consequently, we chose to limit our analyses to the 46 comprehensive, mainstream, and nonschool-sponsored programs that had been interviewed in depth.

---

[8] The discussion of program components first focuses on offerings unrelated to vocational education. Later in the section, workforce-related education opportunities in our sampled programs are separately discussed.

As shown in Table 2.3, most of the programs in our sample provide self-confidence building, parenting education, basic education, remedial education, and advanced academics to program enrollees. Most provide enrollees (and sometimes their babies) transportation. Most provide on-site child care to enrollees' children or some support for child care off-site. Some programs provide both, referring out when the on-site center is filled to capacity.

Table 2.3

Frequency of Specific Program Components by Program Type (in percent)

	Program Type			
Program Component	Comprehensive (No. = 16)	Mainstream (No. = 22)	Nonschool-sponsored (No. = 8)	Total[a] (No. = 46)
On-site child care	75	55	38	46
Other child care support	40	71	75	44
Family planning	81	71	25	45
Help getting welfare benefit	86	85	88	42
Self-confidence building	88	95	75	45
Transportation	64	63	62	41
Case management	88	86	38	46
Parenting education	100	95	75	46
Basic education	100	95	75	46
Remedial education	87	85	71	44
Advanced academics	73	73	62	41
Homebound education	40	38	12	44

[a] The total excludes "other programs" from the analyses. Numbers of programs included in each row vary slightly because of missing data.

The likelihood of specific program components varied by program type, as one might expect. On-site child care is provided by three-quarters of the comprehensive programs in our sample and by more than half of the mainstream programs. In the latter instance, child care and a child care lab often constitute the major program elements, since enrollees take other classes with nonparenting students. Nonschool-sponsored programs are much less likely to offer on-site child care.

More than three-quarters of the comprehensive programs provide enrollees some support for or assistance with family planning. Most comprehensive programs that provide such support offer it on-site, but mainstream and nonschool-sponsored programs typically require that enrollees go elsewhere for such services. These differences are significant because successful family planning for teens is most likely when information and services are available at the same site (WHO, 1980). In most cases, family planning support offered off-site represents little more than a referral to community-based family planning clinics. Unless there is good program-based follow-up, many enrollees will fail to use such a referral (e.g., Nathanson and Becker, 1985).

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Both school-based program types were more likely to provide case management than nonschool-sponsored programs. Indeed, over 80 percent of programs of these types provide case management—a program attribute considered very important in assuring that teenage mothers receive the services that they need (e.g., Polit, 1986).

Every comprehensive program provides enrollees some form of parenting education, and nearly every mainstream program does so as well. Three quarters of the nonschool-sponsored programs provide this component to enrollees. The nearly universal provision of parenting education is not surprising, given the history and goals of teen parent programs. Most pregnancy and parenting programs today continue to regard parenting education as a major goal, given continuing concerns about the limited parenting skills of young mothers, and especially those who will live alone with their babies (e.g., Field et al., 1980; Greene et al., 1981).

The programs in our sample provide enrollees with a range of educational opportunities. For example, all of the comprehensive programs in our sample provide basic education, and nearly all provide remedial education. Almost three-quarters of programs of this type claim to provide advanced academics, often through individualized instruction, but availability depends upon teachers' own skills and credentials. Respondents generally agreed that advanced academics is the weakest program component in comprehensive programs. Mainstream programs also provide enrollees a wide range of educational opportunities. Ninety-five percent of these programs provide basic education and 85 percent provide remedial instruction. Sixty percent provide advanced academics on-site, and 14 percent provide them in another setting. Consistent with their joint sponsorship, nonschool-sponsored programs are less likely to provide educational services. But it is striking that the vast majority do so, a point discussed in more detail in Sec. 4.

PROGRAM MODELS[9]

The 11 programs that we visited during the fieldwork portion of the study differ in terms of the model they follow for dealing with teen pregnancy. Two models emerged: the short-term crisis model and the sequential services model. The short-term crisis model assumes that the period surrounding pregnancy and delivery is critical in terms of directing or redirecting a young mother's life. A wide range of services during this period is believed to help the new mother through the crisis and provide her the psychological, educational, and practical resources necessary to manage on her own when she leaves the program soon after delivery.

Sequential service models link agencies over time to provide focused services that meet the specific needs of mothers and babies at a particular time. Underlying this model is the belief that the need for help continues well past delivery, and that teen mothers cannot be assumed to have acquired the skills to find this help on their own for a considerable time. A third model, the provision of long-term services over an extended period in a single program or through the direction of a single case manager, was not represented in our fieldwork sample.

Nine of the 11 programs that we visited were based upon a short-term crisis-oriented model and provide comprehensive services to enrollees. Eight of these nine enroll students when they become pregnant, although some will take on parents who had not enrolled earlier. Because of their relatively short time frame, the majority of students in these programs at any one time are pregnant; in one case, for instance, the composition was maintained at about 75 percent pregnant, 25 percent parenting. These programs are set up to serve teen parents for varying lengths of time, usually limited by an end point, such as delivery or a certain number of weeks postpartum. Often, the time a mother is allowed to remain in the program is determined by the availability of child care slots in the program's nursery or by the demand for the program. Programs in cities with a high teen birth rate tend to have a large waiting list; they were the least likely to allow mothers to remain long after delivery. Six of the nine short-term programs we visited allow enrollees to remain in the program an extra year or until graduation, although three of these strongly encourage enrollees to leave earlier if they can arrange child care on their own and feel confident about returning to a regular school program. Most of the mothers in these latter programs remain only through the semester of delivery before moving back to their home school or on to a GED program.

---

[9] Data in this subsection were collected during site visits.

The remaining two programs that we visited serve teen parents on a short-term basis but are linked to each other so closely that we characterize them as sequential programs. Enrollees go from one into the other as they progress from pregnancy and the first year postpartum to life as mother of a toddler. These two programs made links, furthermore, to post-program services and support. Mothers spend one to two years at the first program, which provides intensive parenting and basic education services typical of short-term crisis-oriented programs. This program serves middle and high school students, and it also provides child care for infants up to one year of age. There is a mandatory guidance class in which student aptitudes are tested and a range of career possibilities presented. The program assesses whether students meet vocational education eligibility requirements and directs enrollees with skill deficits into a district-run program providing remedial skills development.

The second program has an enrollment constituting male and female, parenting and nonparenting students. The program offers child care for toddlers and ongoing peer and social worker support for parents and focuses on the development of specific job skills.

Nine of the 11 programs that we visited constitute alternative schools; one of these serves a mixed student population comprising any student at risk of dropping out; the other eight serve teen parents only. (See Table 2.4 for a presentation of program locations.) For all but two of the alternative schools the program's location was determined by where space was available; two programs were intentionally located on and near a voc-tech campus to enhance cross-enrollments.

Two additional programs provide services to teen parents enrolled in regular school programs. The first program has no formal location; it is an unofficial effort by school staff to provide counseling and peer support to students at the high school in the absence of a formal district program. The second program, situated on a voc-tech campus and across the street from a high school, was deliberately located there to provide child care to parenting teens enrolled at either school.

Altogether, five programs in our sample are located with or very near vocational education programs. Two programs are collocated with voc-tech centers and one is nearby. Two other programs are collocated at institutions providing vocational education—one at the high school and the other at a continuation school with a career center.

Table 2.4

Fieldwork Program Locations by Breadth of Services

	Breadth of Services	
Program Location	Comprehensive Services	Ancillary Services Only
Isolated separate site	5 programs	
Collocated with special school	2 programs	
Separate site near voc-tech	1 program	
Collocated with voc-tech	1 program	
Collocated with voc-tech, near high school		1 program
Collocated with high school		1 program

PROGRAM GOALS[10]

The programs in our sample tended to have many goals for their enrollees, which is common in such programs (Polit, 1986). Program goals generally fell into three categories: (1) schooling goals, including preventing dropout, completing high school, and getting a GED; (2) parenting outcomes, including healthy babies, healthy mothers, and parental competence; and (3) employment outcomes, including job skills, job placement, and economic self-sufficiency. Another common goal, enhancing self-esteem, was seen as a desired outcome to be achieved through efforts in each of the other three categories. There was remarkable consensus among programs about these goals and how they were ranked. Educational and parenting goals were considered critical in all programs; employment goals were considered far less important in most.

Education Outcomes

As shown in Table 2.5, school dropout prevention was a goal in all of the school-sponsored programs; most also aimed for high school completion or, more rarely, acquisition of a GED. Program staff believed that the diploma or GED was critical to success for teen parents, both as a facilitator of job entry or further education and as a boost to self-esteem. The diploma was preferred to the GED in virtually every program, because it was seen as more marketable. In some districts, funding is specifically targeted to high school diplomas, not GEDs. In these districts, counselors must advise pregnant and parenting students of the GED option surreptitiously, and may have to send them to adult education to get one. This strong push for diplomas raised concern among a distinct minority of respondents, who contended that the GED is a more realistic goal for many school-age parents because it can be achieved more quickly in most cases.

Parenting Outcomes

Improved parenting was also a widespread program goal, and in many programs parenting was a mandatory program component. As shown in Table 2.5, most of the programs worked toward healthy babies and nearly all toward creating competent parents.

---

[10] This section draws on telephone survey data.

Table 2.5

Program Goals by Program Type
(in percent)

Program Goal	Comprehensive (No. = 16)	Mainstream (No. = 22)	Nonschool-sponsored (No. = 8)	Total (No. = 46)
Schooling goals				
Dropout prevention	100	95	75	93
High school completion	100	95	50	83
GED	44	9	25	24
Parenting outcomes				
Healthy baby	81	95	63	85
Healthy mother	81	86	63	80
Competent parent	94	95	88	93
Avoid repeat pregnancy	88	82	50	78
Optimal child development	88	82	50	78
Employment outcomes				
Economic self-sufficiency	75	68	88	74
Vocational education and job-skills training	69	82	75	76
Job placement	56	45	75	54
Work socialization	50	68	75	63

Employment Outcomes

Economic self-sufficiency and vocational education and job skills training were goals for three-quarters of the programs in our sample. Far fewer hoped to achieve job placement. The emphasis on vocational education goals in these programs for pregnant and parenting students is not surprising, given that we looked for such program emphases as a selection criterion in the programs we interviewed, and many of our programs are housed in voc-tech centers. It is likely that a strong vocational education emphasis would be less common in a randomly selected group of such programs. (See, for example, Zellman, 1981; GAO, 1986.)

Endorsement of vocational education/job skills, work socialization, and economic self-sufficiency as program goals varied by type of program, with nonschool-sponsored programs most likely to ascribe to these goals. Among the school-sponsored programs, comprehensive programs were less likely to endorse job-skills training and work socialization as program goals than were mainstream programs.

These findings are consistent with the location and sponsorship of the different program types. Nonschool-sponsored programs are often funded by organizations such as the YWCA, Private Industry Councils,[11] or a County Welfare Department. These funders focus on job-skills training and may require that job placement be a measured program outcome. Among programs in our sample sponsored exclusively by schools, mainstream programs often are collocated with vocational programs in regional voc-tech centers, or because of state funding regulations related to child care, may find themselves in adult community education settings. These settings support enrollee involvement with a range of often sophisticated vocational opportunities. In contrast, comprehensive programs apportion a substantial portion of the limited program time available to improved medical outcomes of pregnancy, limiting the importance and feasibility of vocational training. However, if a program goal is increased economic self-sufficiency (and most times there is such a goal; see Table 2.5), time often is spent on career guidance and vocational skills assessment with the idea that after delivery, new mothers can begin occupational preparation.

---

[11] Private Industry Councils administer JTPA funds, usually contracting out programs.

PROGRAM ACTIVITIES AND SERVICES[12]

Program activities in the programs that we visited generally were consistent with program goals. Most programs appear to provide a wide range of activities and services designed to enhance self-esteem, basic education, and parenting skills.

Academics

Eight of the nine comprehensive programs that we visited provide diploma-oriented academic coursework on-site, usually limited to basic subjects; some offered remedial tutoring. Because of the limited teaching staff and the pressing need to provide basic education and remedial work, advanced academics (e.g., foreign languages, higher math, science) are available in only a few of the programs and only then through special individual arrangement. For example, in one program these courses are available during evening classes at the adult school adjacent to the program. The ninth comprehensive program provides GED preparation only. GED preparation is supplemented by basic skills education for students who lack the skills necessary to begin work on the GED.

Parenting

All eleven programs offer some sort of parenting activities, which range from informal counseling to mandatory classes and time in the child care lab. In six programs, some parenting involvement is required every semester of enrollment. The required parenting class usually meets daily for one class period. One program, however, requires mothers to spend the lunch hour with their babies, to attend a daily one hour class on parenting skills, and to spend a third hour daily with the babies in the child care lab where they learn about child development and practice parenting skills. The entire afternoon of each day is, in effect, devoted to parenting.

Child Care

Child care is universally recognized as the program component most responsible for preventing dropout among teen parents. Nine programs in our sample offer child care on-site. Eight of these are alternative schools; one is a special child care center collocated at a voc-tech and high school. In some cases, child care is limited to newborns, which effectively sets an end date for mothers' participation in the teen parent program. In contrast, some programs arrange for toddler care and allow program participants to use child care services until they graduate. In all nine sites providing child care, it is limited to program hours. When mothers have after-school commitments (including work-study participation), other arrangements must be made, as discussed in more detail in Sec. 3.

---

[12] This subsection relies on fieldwork data.

The tenth program, an alternative school for teen parents, has an arrangement with a high school in the district that offers child care. Transportation is available between the high school and the teen parent program for those mothers who need child care. The final program, the informal groups, has no child care, but staff help young parents find child care through informal referrals.

Transportation

The location of the teen parent program, the child care facility, and vocational courses determine the importance of transportation for parenting students. When these services are centralized in a very large district far from the homes of many teen parents or when each of these services is provided in separate dispersed locations, transportation becomes critical.

Eight of the programs in our sample provide some transportation for enrollees and their infants, but only five provide sufficient transportation to link key services—the teen parenting program, the child care center, and vocational education opportunities—with each other and with enrollees' homes. Three programs link program services and child care with enrollees' homes but fail to provide transportation to off-site vocational education programs. In these programs, the rate of participation in "available" vocational education coursework was zero because there was no transportation for it, as discussed in more detail in Sec. 3. Said one program staff member, "the girls simply can't do it without transportation."

Program staff in districts offering no transportation were not always aware of the need for it. Said a program director in one such district, "It seems that transportation is not a problem. If a girl really wants to participate in the program, she figures out some way to get here." In other programs, staff are aware of and concerned about inadequate transportation. One director complained about surrounding rural districts that did not provide transportation to their teen mothers that allowed them to get into the city to participate in the centralized teen parent program. The rural districts provide no special services of their own but do provide transportation to other special programs (e.g., to the regional voc-tech school) for their students.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Formal recognition of the needs of pregnant and parenting students was widespread in our districts. Nearly all districts in our sample had some program available for pregnant and parenting students. This program typically represented the district's sole response to teen parenting. Teen parents who either chose to remain in regular school programs or who could not be accommodated in the special program rarely received special services. Dropouts were neither tracked nor encouraged to return in any district.

Teen parent programs for the most part aim to keep pregnant and parenting students in school, make them better parents, and prepare them to assume economic responsibility for themselves and their babies. Program goals and opportunities are generally consistent. Programs devote a lot of time to academic coursework and to parenting-related education. Most programs, in fact, require such participation. Provision of vocational education skills training is less common and reflects less consensus about the value of such training during secondary school, an issue we pursue in more detail in the next section.

3. VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN SCHOOL-SPONSORED TEEN PARENT PROGRAMS[1]

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN TEEN PARENT PROGRAMS

School staff everywhere strongly support the goal of economic self-sufficiency for teen mothers. But consensus about how such self-sufficiency might be best achieved, and when, is less apparent. Many staff believe that the best route to economic self-sufficiency for most program enrollees is job-skills training at the secondary level and a high school diploma. By pursuing both at the secondary level, the amount of time mothers must remain in school is minimized, and the risk of dropping out and abruptly terminating training thereby reduced. If vocational education and training programs are carefully selected and sequenced, the acquisition of marketable skills upon completion of high school is believed likely.

But staff are often reluctant to actively advocate this mix. Two concerns get in the way. First, staff in every program we visited expressed fears that their active support for vocational education would convey to program enrollees, their parents, and district staff that teen mothers are incapable of higher education—a concern that reflects widespread perceptions of vocational education as the province of low ability students (e.g., Oakes, 1983). For teen parent program staff, this issue is particularly touchy because teen mothers are involved. Professionally committed to helping young mothers, they do not wish to convey to them the sense that they are incapable of school success or of fulfilling their dreams.

Second, staff hesitate to advocate vocational education because of concerns that active career preparation may overload young mothers for whom simply remaining in school is a considerable achievement. Staff in many sites noted that the increasingly technical and rigorous nature of many vocational education programs, designed to impart skills more relevant to the workforce, makes involvement by teen mothers problematic. Longer hours in some programs, strict attendance requirements in others, and the need to travel to the off-site locations where the most advanced programs are available make it difficult for young mothers to attend and succeed in these programs. If teen mothers find themselves in such situations, staff fear that they will just give up and leave school, forgoing the specific vocational education opportunity, a high school diploma, and the many supportive services the teen parent program offers.

These concerns contribute to widespread reluctance to actively promote vocational education, even in programs where it is a major program feature. They combine with other concerns, discussed below, to make active staff support for gender-nontraditional careers even less likely. In this attitudinal context, we explore vocational education opportunities, access, and use in the programs that we visited.

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

There existed no formal barriers in any of our districts to vocational education for pregnant and parenting students, whether they attended regular school or special programs. Respondents believed that vocational education and skills training were as available to pregnant and parenting students as they were to nonparenting students. To many, however, availability simply indicated that pregnant and parenting students were not formally blocked from participating in vocational education. However, a lack of formal barriers may not imply equal access to these opportunities. Lack of child care, transportation, and minimal academic skills may limit access in fact.

---

[1] Data presented in this section are drawn from both the telephone survey and fieldwork visits.

The array of formal vocational education opportunities available to enrollees in the special programs in which we interviewed is impressive. Most provide enrollees with opportunities for job readiness training, vocational skills assessment, employment counseling and planning, job-specific training, work experience, and job placement assistance, as shown in Table 3.1. Many of these opportunities are available on-site, without the need to travel. More than half of the programs that we queried offer vocational skills assessment and employment counseling services on-site.[2] These findings are consistent with those in our fieldwork programs, as shown in Table 3.2.

Table 3.1

Vocational Education Opportunities Offered in Telephone Interviewed Programs (in percent)

	Program Type			
Vocational Education Opportunity	Comprehensive (No. = 16)[a]	Mainstream (No. = 22)	Nonschool-sponsored (No. = 8)	Total (No. = 46)
Job readiness training				
On-site	7	50	50	36
Travel required	7	25	12	17
Vocational skills assessment				
On-site	77	55	57	62
Travel required	15	30	14	22
Employment counseling and planning				
On-site	78	60	43	63
Travel required	7	30	28	22
Job-specific training				
On-site	50	42	50	46
Travel required	33	42	25	36
Work experience				
On-site	18	12	0	11
Travel required	82	76	75	78
Job placement assistance				
On-site	58	50	29	49
Travel required	25	25	57	29

[a] Numbers of programs included in each row vary slightly because of missing data.

---

[2] This impressive array of formal vocational education opportunities reflects to an unknown degree the fact that programs were selected within districts because they offered vocational education programming. For this reason, the more meaningful finding is the preponderance of such opportunities on-site.

Table 3.2

Vocational Education Opportunities Offered by Visited Teen Parenting Programs

Clientele and Location	Vocational Skills Training	Vocational Guidance Opportunity
Teen mothers only, on-site	4 programs	9 programs
Parents and nonparents, co-site	4 programs	2 programs
Parents and nonparents, remote location	5 programs	—

NOTE: Some programs appear in more than one cell because opportunities are offered in multiple locations.

Vocational Guidance

All programs in our fieldwork sample provide career guidance of some sort, although the intensity and formality of this guidance varies substantially from program to program. Four programs offer career guidance through formal coursework; the remaining seven provide career guidance through counseling. Coursework is limited to generalized introductions to various vocational fields and work on employability skills such as preparing resumes, being interviewed, and dressing appropriately. Most students enter the guidance classes with unclear or unrealistic assumptions about the jobs that they will pursue, and staff appear to do little to sharpen or alter these career notions, an issue discussed in more detail below.

Only two of the programs in our sample had made a major resource commitment to career guidance. Staff in these programs had obtained Perkins Sex Equity funding (Title II) to hire a guidance counselor whose job responsibilities include aptitude testing, career exploration, and review of employability skills. Both of these programs offer field trips, provide guest speakers, and furnish posters and other support materials encouraging vocational education and career planning, particularly in gender-nontraditional fields.

Other programs had made more limited attempts to connect enrollees to the world of work and increase their sense of themselves as future workers. In one program, for example, employers come to the program one day a year and, after interviewing enrollees, provide each with an "employability profile."

Vocational Skills Training

Skills training, through vocational coursework or on-the-job training, is available to enrollees in all but three of the visited programs. In most programs, these opportunities are available outside the program, in classes that mix parenting students with their nonparenting peers.

On-site opportunities are limited. As shown in Table 3.2, just four programs provide vocational skills training on-site for teen mothers only. Three of these programs limit the training offered to one course: business, typetronics, and computers, respectively. In the fourth program, a school for teen mothers with substantial enrollment located in a large district, size permits it to offer vocational education classes similar to those at a comprehensive high school. This program has developed a dynamic and popular entrepreneurial program in industrial sewing. None of this on-site training leads to state certification. Advanced skills training and programs leading to state certification are found only in co-site or off-site locations.

Four programs offer vocational training through the schools with which they are collocated; in these cases, program enrollees may cross-enroll in vocational education as long as they are willing to mix with nonparenting students. Five programs offer vocational skills training to program enrollees at remote locations, so that teen mothers must travel each day to use them. Two of these programs also offer on-site vocational education (one course each, described above). A third program, unique in our sample, *requires* that enrollees participate in vocational education. Students must either take courses at the regional voc-tech school or engage in a supervised work-study job.

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION ACCESS AND USE

Vocational Education Access[3]

On the basis of interviews with program staff, each telephone interviewer made a global assessment of the access that program enrollees had to workforce-oriented vocational education as compared to nonparenting students.[4] These ratings included the number of opportunities that focused on nontraditional jobs,[5] strong sex equity efforts, and physical access, assessed both in terms of program location and by the percentage of enrollees currently involved in vocational education. If the opportunities were exclusively off-site for pregnant and parenting students but on-site for the nonparenting, access for teen parents was considered to be less than equal.

Estimates of the percentage of enrollees who typically used or were currently taking advantage of vocational education opportunities often were the most difficult to obtain. In programs that did not stress vocational education, program staff generally had no idea of the numbers of enrollees involved with vocational education. Usually, vocational educators were also unable to guess at these numbers. In one case, our questions about vocational education use sparked discussion of this issue for the first time. More commonly, staff were able to concur on an estimate but reached it without benefit of any recorded information.

Interviewer ratings of teen parent access reveal a wide range, with some effects of program type. One-quarter of the programs included in our sample were rated as providing teen parent program enrollees better access to workforce-related vocational education than was available to nonparenting students. Generally, these were mainstream programs located on the site of a voc-tech center, which meant that teen parents did not need to travel but nonparenting students did. Other pregnant and parenting programs with "better" access provide enrollees in-depth vocational counseling and pre-employment skills training on-site as a core program component. Parenting teens who receive this special attention are described by school and program staff as knowing more about available vocational education training opportunities and as more likely to participate in them than nonparenting students, who do not receive this special attention. Some programs reported a fairly high proportion of pregnant and parenting students involved in vocational education and better retention rates for those pregnant and parenting students who are involved than for nonparenting students.

---

[3] This subsection draws from data collected in telephone interviews.

[4] As discussed above, teen parents were not formally excluded from any of these opportunities. This subsection focuses on logistical and other barriers that may mitigate access in practice.

[5] This assessment excluded coursework available to program enrollees that focused exclusively on parenting or pregnancy.

One-third of programs were rated as providing the same "true" access to vocational education opportunities for program enrollees as was provided to nonparenting students. These programs tended to be mainstream programs in which parenting and nonparenting students attend most classes together, often on the site of a specialized voc-tech center.

Another third of teen parent programs were rated as providing pregnant and parenting students unequal and inferior access.[6] Most informal programs fell into this category. Separate site, comprehensive programs in which many vocational opportunities require travel also appear in this category.

In some programs, vocational education access was intentionally limited; often it was sacrificed to meet other goals. Since many comprehensive programs are available to enrollees for a limited time and focus during that time on the pregnancy, vocational education opportunities are constrained, and few enrollees choose to take advantage of those available. Staff in these programs often consider vocational education a distant second or third to simply keeping enrollees in school during this period and providing support for parenting. For example, in one program located at a separate site, classes are compressed into a half-day schedule to accommodate medical and other appointments. Although some vocational education is available in the program, no enrollees had room in their schedules for it.

More often, logistical problems reduce teen parent access to vocational education. In one district, the teen parent program is not available at the voc-tech center, and transportation to it from the teen parent program is not available either. Consequently, pregnant and parenting students who choose to enroll in the teen parent program are forced to forgo the specialized vocational education opportunities available at the voc-tech center. In several other districts, extended day vocational education programs make them inaccessible to students who use child care centers that close at the end of the regular school day. In other districts, strict policies with regard to absences in some vocational education programs make it impossible for pregnant and parenting students to sustain participation. One vocational educator to whom we spoke delineated the issues surrounding pregnant and parenting students' access to vocational education. "In theory," he said, "they have the same opportunity as any other student." But he then went on to explain that in his district, vocational training programs often involved a "commitment" of time and effort not required by other school programs. Some offerings begin very early in the morning, and others tend to run late in the day. Pregnant and parenting students, he said, are unlikely to want to make that commitment, or may be unable to do so.

In nearly all programs, staff were far more eager and able to discuss vocational education opportunities than they were to discuss issues of access and use. We were surprised by how rarely vocational education participation was tracked, even in programs purporting to place considerable emphasis upon it. The lack of information reflects the general dearth of evaluation data in these programs, as discussed above, but also reflects the programs' often ambivalent stance on vocational education. Seen as desirable and perhaps even essential at some point, many staff were unsure of the importance of vocational education during the often brief period of program enrollment.

---

[6] For the remaining program, interviewers were unable to make an assessment because program staff lacked information.

Our data suggest that access and use are facilitated when a member of the teen parent program staff is formally responsible for vocational education. The absence of such an individual in nearly every program, and also the lack of a person within the vocational education system with responsibility for teen parents, contribute to the low vocational education profile in most teen parent programs. These factors in turn limit the amount of attention and resources devoted to improving vocational education access and use, as discussed below.

Use Patterns[7]

In general, use of skills training is fairly low in the 11 programs that we visited, as shown in Table 3.3. In only two programs do all or most enrollees take advantage of available vocational education opportunities; one of these programs requires vocational education enrollment. According to respondents, only a handful of young mothers from each program enroll in any vocational education each year; they are much more likely to enroll in vocational education when it is offered on-site through the program. When on-site vocational education courses satisfy multiple needs, enrollment is very high. The industrial sewing course mentioned above, for example, enrolls two-thirds of the program's teen mothers each year and always has a waiting list. Staff believe this occurs because the class allows mothers to sew clothes that their babies need, teaches them a marketable (if low-paying) skill, and helps enrollees earn money by providing a market for student projects.

Table 3.3

Utilization of Vocational Education in Visited Programs

		Level of Enrollee Involvement		
Location of Vocational Education	No. of Programs[a]	None	Some	Most/All
On-site	4	0 programs	2 programs	2 programs
Co-site	4	1 program	3 programs	0 programs
Off-site, with travel arranged	3	2 programs	1 program	0 programs
Off-site, no transportation	3	3 programs	0 programs	0 programs

[a] Columns do not sum to 11 because some programs appear in multiple rows.

Teen mothers are less likely to take advantage of co-site than on-site vocational education options even though transportation is not necessary. Staff explain that enrollees often do not use them because they are more comfortable remaining with other teen mothers in the teen parent program. Indeed, several staff noted that the reason many young mothers come to comprehensive programs is to avoid interaction with nonparenting peers. Nevertheless, in some programs co-site vocational education is used by many enrollees. In these programs, vocational education is "programmed in." For example, all enrollees are walked over together, they participate in prescheduled shadowing programs, or they receive all of their education at the co-site, obtaining only ancillary services through the teen parent program.

Rarely do teen mothers choose to participate in vocational education when it requires travel off-site. Even with transportation, cross-enrollments are low; of three programs offering travel, only one has enrollees regularly availing themselves of this option; in this program, vocational education is required. Administrators at the vocational education centers serving the other two programs explained that teen mothers do not come because they are not sent by teen parent program staff; other interviews in this and other districts revealed that teen mothers may not be invited. According to teen parent program staff, some staff at the vocational education centers prefer to fill available spots with other, more "deserving" students on their long waiting lists.

---

[7] This subsection uses data collected during site visits.

In the three programs with only off-site vocational education and no transportation, there is no cross-enrollment whatsoever. Although one of these programs claims that it will accommodate any enrollee who would like to participate in vocational education, the arrangements that would be necessary are complex and depend upon the teen mother to take the initiative. The other two programs openly acknowledge the absence of vocational education but believe that such a tradeoff has to be made if they are to provide other services. In these districts, teen mothers must choose between the teen parent program, which offers child care, and the local vocational center or comprehensive high school, which offer vocational education but do not provide child care. Lack of transportation does not permit both.

Program goals appear to affect the use of vocational education opportunities, as shown in Table 3.4. Programs with clear self-sufficiency or employment development goals are more likely to enroll teen mothers in vocational education. Four out of five programs in our sample with such goals enrolled at least some teen mothers in vocational education. In two, most or all were enrolled; in two others, use was lower. The fifth program put its economic self-sufficiency goal into operation by focusing on acquisition of a high school diploma, and assumed that young mothers would get post-secondary education and job-skills training after program completion. In this program, there were no vocational enrollments at all.

Table 3.4

Vocational Education Use as a Function of Employability Goal

	Employability Goal	
Use Level	Yes	No
No use	1 program	2 programs
Some use	2 programs	4 programs
Majority use	2 programs	0 programs

Two out of six programs without employment-related goals had no vocational education enrollments, whereas two enrolled some teen mothers in vocational education. The remaining two programs in our sample provided ancillary services only; since teen mothers involved in these programs attend regular school programs, some who use these services enroll in vocational education but do so without any special support from the teen parent program.

These enrollment patterns suggest limited teen mother commitment to vocational education; when the costs are high they tend to forgo these opportunities. Staff, too, are ambivalent about vocational education for teen mothers; this ambivalence is translated into a lack of encouragement to take vocational education and the absence of meaningful access in some cases. Schedule overloads, the dominance of other goals, and self-selection into teen parent programs and away from vocational education influence use. These and other barriers to vocational education are discussed in more detail below.

Barriers to Use

Child care and transportation. It is not enough that teen mothers receive child care and transportation; these services must be coordinated with vocational education opportunities if they are not to pose a barrier to them. In only one of the seven sites in which the teen parent program and vocational education exist in separate locations does transportation exist that takes child care location into consideration. Even in this site, where buses are available between the program, voc-tech center, child care, and home, the timing of the buses is variable enough to make connections difficult. Although nonparenting students in this district are able to leave directly for home from the voc-tech center at the end of the day, mothers have to go from the voc-tech site back to the teen parent program to collect their children from child care before catching a bus home. Sometimes the bus home from the teen parent program, geared to students on-site, has already left by the time parents arrive from the voc-tech center. These problems illustrate the complex logistical issues involved in making vocational education accessible to teen mothers. Most of the programs in our sample that offered off-site vocational education had not even begun to think through the effect of these issues on use of vocational education.

Goal conflicts. Most of the programs that we visited impose course requirements on their participants designed to further key program goals, particularly parenting goals. Often, these requirements conflict with vocational education participation. As described in Sec. 2, programs tend to focus on academic and parenting skills; consequently, enrollees' schedules are often filled with academic and parenting classes. Indeed, in six of the 11 programs that we visited, the goal of improved parenting skills was implemented through required time each day in prenatal, parenting, or child development coursework. Some of these programs require such involvement of mothers for as long as they are enrolled in the teen parent program, even when that involvement continues for years. Although these programs also recognize the importance of vocational preparation for mothers, required parenting components frequently make participation in vocational coursework impossible. Staff typically were proud of the parenting requirements and the progress they were making in teaching enrollees how to be good mothers. Often, no one had considered that the intensive commitment to parenting interfered with participation in other coursework, particularly vocational education. When our interviewer noted this barrier, staff appeared to accept it, bowing to what they perceived to be the greater urgency of parenting education.

Strengthened academic requirements. School district officials in all our sample sites reported districtwide declines in vocational enrollments as a result of increased academic requirements. These increased academic requirements reduce access to vocational education for all students by limiting the time available for vocational education classes in their schedules. The effect of reinforced academics is even greater for teen mothers. Many teen mothers are behind in their academic work because of absences or inadequate skill levels. Often, they cannot meet entry requirements for vocational training programs without considerable remedial work. Only one teen parent program in our sample had intervened to help enrollees meet these requirements while beginning vocational education program participation. Yet staff in several programs noted that such simultaneous preparation would encourage more teen mothers to become involved in vocational education opportunities.

Program hours. Schedules often leave little room for vocational education, particularly when programs operate on reduced hours to accommodate clinic appointments and well baby visits. Vocational education program hours can also limit access. When vocational education extends beyond the teen parent program's school day, transportation and child care problems multiply. In most districts, there is no late afternoon school transportation. Since teen parent program nurseries are timed to coincide with the school day, mothers usually cannot leave their children at the center for the additional time needed to participate in extended day vocational education. One alternative school had to make special arrangements for teen parents to meet a schoolwide requirement for work-study participation because of these logistical difficulties. Teen parents were allowed to be teachers' aides on-site rather than participating in off-site on-the-job training. Teachers' aides cleaned blackboards and ran the copiers, providing them little or no job-skills training. These adjustments were made because vocational education was required; had it not been, no doubt teen mothers would simply have forgone it.

Teen mothers as decisionmakers. Most programs leave decisions about vocational education to teen mothers. Although programs usually require parenting coursework without regard to the student's background or interests, they shy away from making any equivalent demands for vocational education. Program staff say they leave the decision to take vocational education or college-prep courses to the individual, neither promoting nor discouraging the pursuit of work-relevant courses. They adopt this hands-off approach, staff say, in the interest of meeting individual needs and preferences. Program staff failed to see any inconsistency between required and often intensive parenting coursework and a hands-off approach to vocational education or intensive, individualized career planning.

Virtually all the teen mothers whom we interviewed indicated that becoming pregnant had made them more concerned about a career than they had been before. Typical was a 15-year-old with a two-year-old child. When asked if parenthood had made her more concerned about a career, she said, "Yes, definitely. I never even thought about it before." A 16-year-old mimicked this response: "Before (I got pregnant)," she said, "I wouldn't care about working, I just thought about going out with my friends." Now, she indicated she is much more focused on school, because "I want a future for myself and my daughter." A 17-year-old who is graduating early indicated that her pregnancy led her to want to finish school as quickly as possible so that she could begin to earn money. A teen parent program staff member suggested and helped her plan an accelerated program.

In a few cases, the return to school represented the acceptance of a personal challenge. A 19-year-old senior with a three-month-old son told us that becoming pregnant had made her much more serious about school. She had run away from home the previous year and had not attended school, missing the chance to graduate with her class. When she became pregnant, her father said that now she had really messed up her life. Returning to school, she told us, represented "my opportunity to show them (my family) that I could get my life together."

The few teen mothers whose career concerns had not increased since pregnancy were almost all married or engaged. One respondent who planned to marry before the impending birth told us that her pregnancy had decreased her career motivation, as she intended to marry and stay home with her baby. The baby's father, who was also a senior, had abandoned his college plans to support the family. At the time of the interview, he was exploring enlistment in the Air Force, as he had heard that they might pay for college. A second teen parent told us that she was less concerned about her own career, but "more concerned about my husband's career." Her husband, aged 24, had a good job that had enabled them to purchase a house. One unmarried mother told us that her career ambition had declined since her baby's birth. "You have to think about your child too (in addition to your career)—if the baby's sick, forget your career."

Most of our respondents were taking at least some steps to prepare for a career. For our interviewees, virtually all of whom were in school, staying in school was currently the key component of career preparation. Indeed, several young mothers who had dropped out of school before pregnancy were motivated by the pregnancy, and by the availability of a special teen parent program, to return to school and prepare for a career. One of these young mothers, 15 years old, indicated that "having the baby made me change my life a lot. I wanted to come back (to school); I'm glad that I came back."

Those who returned to school tended to do so because of having learned about the teen parent program from a friend or relative, or from an ad on television. Similarly, most of the teen parents who were attending school when their pregnancy became known did not learn of the teen parent program from school staff. The failure to obtain such information from school staff occurred in some part because teens rarely confided in school staff about their pregnancy. In other cases, however, school staff who did know about a pregnancy failed to use the opportunity to inform the teen parent of her options. Typical of this latter situation was a report from an 18-year-old with two children. When she was pregnant with her first child, the principal approached her and asked her if she was pregnant, "but he gave me no advice, support, or referrals."

A few teen mothers who did consult with school staff about their options indicated to us that they had received incomplete information. In one district that we visited, for example, the only option was a weekly support group. Those who wanted more support could transfer to a larger neighboring district, to enroll in their comprehensive teen parent program under an interdistrict agreement. None of the teen parents to whom we spoke, all of whom were enrolled in the more limited local program, had known or been informed of the latter opportunity. Although most of those with whom we discussed the neighboring program indicated that they would not have wanted to leave their friends to attend, one teen parent said that knowing about that option would have made a big difference to her. Her parents had reacted very negatively to her pregnancy and had put pressure on her to leave school because of the embarrassment it might cause a younger sister enrolled in the same school. She did remain in school, but being able to go to another district would have substantially reduced family tensions.

Most respondents indicated that they had never spoken with anyone at school about vocational education or careers more generally. Those few who had spoken with someone told us that they were encouraged to pursue vocational education. In some cases, these encounters were limited to speakers coming into the teen parent program to talk about careers; more often, the discussion was personal. The content often focused on the value of vocational education to an already-chosen career. Typical was a pregnant sophomore who wanted to be a nurse. A discussion with her guidance teacher focused on the value of the skills that she would acquire in vocational education to her future career as a nurse. In her case, a health occupations class in the 11th grade and health-related on-the-job training in her senior year were suggested. A pregnant 16-year-old with the same career goal was similarly advised. One teen mother told a very different story. Her academic advisor had warned her against vocational education, which, she said, teen mothers are often advised to take. The advisor encouraged her to continue to plan for college. However, her impending marriage and the responsibilities of motherhood had led her to decide that a high school diploma was sufficient aspiration for the time being. She had graduated from high school and was now awaiting the birth.

We saw considerable evidence of reticence on the part of teen parents to go out of their way to get vocational training. They typically do not approach program personnel and ask to have their schedules revised or arrangements made to accommodate off-site or co-site vocational education. Indeed, teen parents typically deal with the many pressures they face by taking the easiest path through school. If vocational education is expected of all participants and the arrangements to take it are institutionalized, teen mothers will comply. If obstacles exist, the commitment to taking vocational education is often too tenuous to overcome them. Leaving the responsibility for vocational education to teen mothers creates an additional barrier to its use.

In the programs that we visited, we saw that provision of strong career guidance and active vocational education recruitment gives teen mothers employment direction and facilitates vocational education enrollments. For example, in one GED program that we visited, 100 percent of last year's graduates were involved in post-secondary training as a result of active guidance and directiveness on the part of program staff. Such guidance can also reduce barriers to vocational education while enrolled in the program. In one district that we visited, active guidance led to demands by most enrollees for vocational education. In this district, entry into voc-tech programs requires passage of eligibility exams. Demands by teen mothers for immediate entry, with support from program staff, led the district to coordinate the remedial education and voc-tech programs, so that teen mothers could begin job-skills training while they studied to pass the eligibility exams. This example illustrates that the more teen mothers know about what is available in the job market and in their own school system, and the more support and direction they receive, the better able they are to recognize and advocate for access to vocational education.

CHOOSING GENDER-NONTRADITIONAL CAREERS

Adult respondents in all 11 programs that we visited recognize that work in traditionally female professions is not well paid. Consequently, they are virtually unanimous in endorsing the concept of gender-nontraditional careers for teen parents. Most, staff noted, would be the sole support of their coming baby and of any subsequent babies as well. Gender-traditional work was virtually guaranteed, they believed, to provide at best a life style characterized by limited economic opportunity. At worst, with additional children, gender-traditional work would consign a family to working poverty and the problems of the working poor, e.g., limited or no employer-provided health coverage.

Two of the 11 school districts that we visited had applied for and received Perkins funds to support efforts to encourage the choice of gender-nontraditional careers. In these districts, Perkins funds were combined with other funds to support a teen parent program counselor whose job it is to promote gender-nontraditional careers. These counselors arrange for speakers and field trips and design shadowing programs, often providing these services for nonparenting students as well.

In several other programs, a conscious decision had been made not to apply for Perkins funds because the cost of applying for and administering the limited funds available was perceived to outweigh any possible benefits. In these programs, no other efforts are made to support nontraditional choices.

Whether or not their program attempted to encourage gender-nontraditional career choices, adult respondents everywhere perceived such efforts as likely to be limited at best in their effect. Program staff told us that when teen mothers make career choices, they tend to choose gender-traditional ones; most commonly clerical, cosmetology, and industrial sewing. Some slight increase in the numbers of female students enrolling in male-traditional classes was noted in some districts, but these increases were not attributed to any special efforts to encourage such enrollments. In other districts, no one had bothered to track the numbers of young women making gender-nontraditional career choices. In still others, most respondents believed that the popularity of gender-nontraditional careers had not increased at all. This was not a surprise to staff, who often felt they were up against the collective strength of generations of sex-role prescriptions in attempting to alter students' career choices.

Staff perceptions were largely borne out in our discussions with teen parents. With few exceptions, the career goals of the young mothers to whom we spoke were gender-traditional. The majority were interested in cosmetology, nursing, office work, and medical assistance. A few were interested in elementary school teaching.

These career goals tracked closely with the vocational experiences that our respondents had had or were currently having. Typing, secretarial, and cosmetology topped the list of vocational education courses they had taken; indeed, there were few others on the list.

The strong commitment to the principle of nontraditional careers and the widespread perception that programmatic efforts to promote these choices were only minimally effective led to frustration for many teen parent program and vocational education staff. However, this frustration did not impel staff to work informally and individually to promote these outcomes. Most commonly, we found the opposite. Staff in several teen parent programs indicated that although they were aware that the pattern of career choices among program enrollees was quite traditional, they felt there was little they could do and there were numerous costs associated with trying.

Only a very few of the teens to whom we spoke had talked with any school staff about gender-nontraditional work or career preparation. Those few who had done so indicated that the discussion had focused on nontraditional career options and on the higher salaries that could be made in these sorts of jobs. But these discussions did not appear to influence career decisions.

Our interviews indicate that teen mothers, whether or not they consult with any school staff, make career decisions on their own or in consultation with parents and partners. In a few instances, parents obviously had had a big role in career decisionmaking. One teen mother who had always wanted to be a teacher had planned to enroll in a business data class to be able to support her child in the short term. Her parents, with whom she lived, forbade her to enroll in the business data class, or in any other vocational education course, on grounds that she might then forsake her ambition to attend college and teach school.

Nearly all interviewees professed to having a career goal (only the youngest seemed uncertain); most told us that they had had it for a long time. Although about half indicated that they had been exposed to some discussion of career options or vocational education, either from regular school staff (usually counselors) or teen parent program staff, they tended not to follow any advice offered, choosing courses on the basis of long-standing career goals, which, as noted above, were overwhelmingly gender-traditional. One 16-year-old with a one-year-old child told us that she had been encouraged to pursue the health occupations and to consider the higher-paying ones. She had long wanted to be a medical assistant, she said, so she basically ignored the advice to prepare for higher-paying health-related work. An 18-year-old with two children had talked with the employability teacher who worked with the teen parent program about gender-nontraditional options. Although she learned that these options often paid much better than gender-traditional ones, she was continuing to pursue her goal of becoming an LVN or RN, because "I don't like mechanics or road work."

Staff efforts to encourage more ambitious choices within a given career met with similar resistance. Several teen mothers described discussions that they had had with school staff in which the staff member pressed them to pursue a more ambitious track. In one case, for example, the staff member encouraged a teen mother who was enrolling in a clerical course to pursue accounting instead. The young mother decided against it, because she thought that it would be too hard. At the time of our visit, this young mother had graduated from high school and was enrolled in a nursing program at the local community college. In another case, a counselor urged a teen mother to move from the clerical to the secretarial sequence. She decided against it, choosing to remain in the clerical course she had chosen earlier because she had heard it was easier.

Even when problems emerged in pursuing their career preparation, teen parents rarely sought out the help of school staff. For example, one young mother wanted to study photography, but was unable to enroll in the already full class. She chose cosmetology instead. She had never thought to ask for help in getting into the photography class, or in thinking about other options.

One program that we visited was located in an agricultural area. Here, staff had put aside their wish to promote gender-nontraditional careers and had adopted an approach to career choice that accommodated the conservative views of program enrollees. Most teen parents in this program had limited awareness of career options; staff attempted to increase their awareness within the context of this comprehensive program. But although teen parents had little knowledge about specific careers, it was a rare enrollee who came to the program without a clear sense of which kinds of work were acceptable and which were not. Not surprisingly, the "acceptable" jobs tended to be gender-traditional ones.

Staff in this program felt highly constrained in their efforts to promote gender-nontraditional options. In this farming community, families also had very traditional notions about what kinds of work their daughters might do. White or pink collar jobs were regarded by many of these families as a step up in social status. They strongly resisted efforts to promote any sort of "dirty" work. Staff worried that a student's decision to pursue a gender-nontraditional career might alienate her from her family. This, in turn, might result in the family withdrawing the student from the teen parent program.

This had, in fact, occurred in the course of the summer program, where students have opportunities to work in a variety of settings, many gender-nontraditional, and earn at the minimum wage. Program staff strongly encourage summer program enrollment, believing that actual work experience teaches young mothers important lessons about holding jobs and provides them experiences that can only be approximated in the classroom. Staff had resigned themselves over time to placing virtually all teen mothers in gender-traditional summer jobs. They continue to provide students gender-nontraditional work opportunities but had come to terms with the reality that few if any would avail themselves of them.

In another program with gender-nontraditional training options, virtually every enrollee wanted to be a nurse and had acted on this preference by enrolling in nursing training. Staff in this program attributed this pattern to the inexorable workings of sex-role prescriptions, plus the powerful effects of peer pressure conveyed in the form of critical mass. The program's new guidance counselor bemoaned this pattern but felt highly constrained in her own actions. Her predecessor had been extremely forceful in pushing nontraditional careers, and sometimes expressed exasperation to the teen mothers who insisted on pursuing "female" interests in the face of her rational arguments to the contrary. Staff in the program believe that her missionary zeal did not turn teen mothers toward nontraditional careers but succeeded only in alienating them. The new guidance counselor had learned from this experience—perhaps too well. At the time of our visit, when she had been in her position for less than a year, she had adopted a clear hands-off attitude, at least until she found her own path.

The accommodations that the staff in these two programs had made to the conservative views and preferences of young mothers and their families was one that we observed in other programs as well. Often, staff commented that they were afraid to push too hard for gender-nontraditional careers out of fear that they might alienate students and perhaps drive them away from career training entirely. The risk of alienating students was viewed as particularly high among teen mothers, because many students still needed to be convinced of the need to prepare for any work at all, despite their willingness to talk about careers. In some programs, many enrollees come from families in which there are no role models for full-time work. In other cases, enrollees are too young to make such choices, staff argued.

Underlying staff concerns was a sense that the choice of a gender-nontraditional career was not an easy one for most teen mothers. Such a choice first depends upon acceptance of work as a major part of life. Such acceptance often requires that she put aside fantasies that a high-earning "Mr. Right" will come along and obviate any need for employment. A young woman also has to understand the importance of income, and how inadequate a salary from a gender-traditional job is in providing for herself, her child, and any subsequent children. Finally, a young mother has to be strong enough emotionally to withstand likely opposition from family and friends. Few teen mothers meet these conditions. Given the potential costs, staff offer gender-nontraditional options and generally let enrollees choose for themselves.

In a few programs, gender-traditional career preferences were reinforced by logistics: The traditional choice was also the easy, or only, one. In one comprehensive program, for example, typetronics was the only job-skills training offered on-site. It had been chosen, according to staff, because students found it a useful skill, and because the program had the resources to purchase the necessary equipment. Although other less traditional career training opportunities were available to program enrollees, these were located at the centralized vocational education facility, access to which necessitated a bus trip. Transportation was available to program enrollees, but no one was enrolled in any of these off-site training opportunities at the time of our visit, and staff reported that this pattern of nonattendance was one of long standing. Staff were very understanding of the young mothers' reluctance to board the bus to the off-site program. They indicated that the girls did not like to leave their babies during the day and that the bus trip might be unpleasant for pregnant students. The effect, however, was that in this comprehensive, isolated program where parenting students could finish high school, logistical barriers combined with sex-role expectations to direct virtually every enrollee into gender-traditional vocational coursework.

Teen mothers in several teen parent programs confirmed what staff had told us about gender-nontraditional training. Many had enrolled in typing because it was the only vocational education course that was offered in their comprehensive teen parent program, or because they had an open period. In one of these programs there were options outside the program, but they did not wish to board a bus to go elsewhere. Several of these young mothers hated typing, but there were no other course options of any kind within the teen parent program. A lack of course options was even more problematic for a few: One 16-year-old teen parent with unusually high aspirations (she wanted to be an attorney) was spending one period per day in typing, and two in on-the-job training, which consisted of handling the teen parent program's front desk.

The realities described by program staff—traditional attitudes and goals on the part of students and their families, reluctance to add additional travel to their daily schedules, and staff concerns about losing students entirely if they are perceived as pushing certain choices too hard—appeared to have bred substantial resignation among staff on the issue of gender-nontraditional careers. This sense of resignation led staff to back off when they might have jumped in to reinforce or facilitate the kind of career choice they wished students to make. In interviews with teen mothers, it became clear that staff basically drew the line on this issue at providing film strips, speakers, and abstract support for the concept of gender-nontraditional careers. Few were willing to provide personal support or advocacy at the point when an individual teen parent had to make a career decision.

A good case in point concerned a young woman who had long been considering a career in auto mechanics. She talked to the vocational counselor late one school year about whether to enroll in the auto body program or the cosmetology program the following fall. He told her to take whatever she preferred, forgoing an unusual opportunity to reinforce an expressed interest in a gender-nontraditional career. She took the forms home with her at the end of the school year, and before the deadline for signing up for the shop class had passed, the young woman discovered that she was pregnant. She decided, independently, that it would be too difficult for her to participate in the auto body course while she was pregnant, so she signed up for cosmetology. This young lady told our interviewer that while she was enjoying the cosmetology sequence, she was sad about her lost opportunity to pursue auto body work.

Another young mother to whom we spoke had enrolled in a clerical program despite a strong interest in accounting and encouragement from program staff to pursue her interest. They told her that she would be in a position to get a much better, higher-paying job if she took the accounting sequence. Although she agreed with their argument, this sophomore decided against accounting because it was "just too much to deal with while thinking about the baby." The clerical course seemed easier, and because it was gender-traditional, she could avoid the academic and social stress the accounting course might pose.

This young mother's decision points to important and largely unresolved issues in encouraging the acquisition of job training and job skills by young mothers: When is the appropriate time to acquire them? And how much can be expected of young mothers? From its beginning in secondary schools, vocational education was seen by many as a carrot for retaining and engaging less able or academically oriented students. Vocational education would keep students in school; skills training would improve the chances that poor youth would gain the ability to earn a decent living. But for students with children, vocational education may instead represent a stick. For at least some of these students, school retention and completion, without a rigorous vocational education program, may be sufficient accomplishment.

These unresolved issues often cause staff, who generally support vocational education and gender-nontraditional careers in particular, to refrain in specific cases from pushing teen mothers too insistently toward it. They tend to be most comfortable in the "professional" role common in health care settings such as family planning clinics, in which clients are expected to make their own decisions, even "wrong" ones, without interference from the values of the professional (Nathanson and Becker, 1983). Consistent with this role, most take the position that film strips and related efforts allow teen parents to recognize gender-nontraditional options, and then it is up to them to make career decisions in consultation with their families, who often have strong opinions on this matter. But this stance ignores the passivity of many teen mothers and their lack of decisionmaking experience. As Nathanson and Becker (1983) suggest, young teenagers may do better with a "parental" model, in which professionals are more active and directive. If staff members refrain from being "parental," teen mothers are likely to choose traditional, easier options, or to make no choice at all.

Our data suggest that a judicious combination of pushing, support, and facilitation can accomplish a great deal. We encountered several instances where program staff had intervened to make vocational education possible when a teen mother had believed it was not. In a few cases, this involved making special child care arrangements; in others, it involved working with vocational instructors to allow teen parents to make up work that was missed when babies were sick even though the formal rules severely limited absences. In each case, the young mother was surprised and pleased that a program she had believed she could not attend had become available to her.

SUMMARY

In all the districts in our sample, pregnant and parenting students are accorded the same formal vocational education opportunities as nonparenting students. But our data reveal a far more complicated picture. A number of barriers unique to pregnant and parenting students, such as the need to travel between programs, or the location of child care, may in practice constrain formally equal opportunity. Although meaningful access to opportunities appears equal in about one-third of programs, in another third, such access is less in practice for pregnant and parenting students. And in one-quarter of programs a number of conditions, e.g., shared site programs, required guidance, required vocational education, on-site child care, and a focus on long-term employability, serve to make vocational education more accessible to pregnant and parenting students than to nonparenting students.

Use of vocational education is limited in most programs. Our analyses reveal that staff rarely monitor use, or actively advocate for it. They cite concerns about overload and family alienation as major reasons for taking a hands-off approach. Nathanson and Becker (1983) suggest that such a "professional" approach may not be helpful for young teens, who expect and need a more directive, "parental" model of interaction.

In choosing vocational education, teen mothers often assume that attendance rules and other policies that create barriers to vocational education enrollment cannot be modified, and consequently give up their aspirations before they are even expressed. A more active, "parental," problem-solving approach by staff might encourage teen mothers to identify and pursue their preferences. Increasing awareness of career options is important, but such awareness will not in itself overcome barriers to vocational education enrollments. When personal decisions must be made, individual involvement and commitment on the part of staff may be essential to promote vocational education and gender-nontraditional choices in particular.

4. COMMUNITY-BASED PROGRAMS

INTRODUCTION

The original focus of our study was on school-based and school-sponsored programs, as discussed in Secs. 1–3. Our analysis of these programs revealed some important, inherent limitations. Most notably, these programs serve only those teen parents who choose to remain in school, and who learn about and choose to enter a special teen parent program. None of the programs we visited had any outreach component designed to attract school dropouts, or even to recruit current students who might not know of the program. Most, in fact, were unable to serve all of those students who requested program services. Consequently, the use of limited program resources to reach additional teen parents did not make sense.

Data on pregnancy-precipitated dropout rates (e.g., Upchurch and McCarthy, 1989) indicate that teen parents who remain in school constitute a distinct minority—those, one could argue, who pose the lowest risk of being trapped in long-term poverty (e.g., Roosa, 1986). We felt it important to examine programs that attempt to serve dropouts and improve the life chances of those teen parents who may be at higher risk.

Our school program data also revealed that those programs, as part of large school bureaucracies, are often constrained in terms of their ability to innovate or accommodate to the needs of their clientele. To some degree, this may reflect the scarce resources available to most programs. We hoped that by looking at programs that were sponsored by community-based organizations, we could gain some insight into the possibilities and limits of innovation in teen parent programs. Often, school-based programs are rather isolated from other potential sources of services, such as medical care and welfare support. We wondered if community-based programs might be able to forge closer links to other support services because they themselves are part of that community. Interviews in community-based programs would help to address that question.

Our analyses of school-based programs (Secs. 2–3) revealed that most are organized around a crisis model, which dictates that the period immediately surrounding pregnancy and delivery is crucial for helping teen parents cope in the short and long term. Consistent with the crisis model, the programs that we visited provided a wide range of services, usually for a short period of time. Community-based programs, which often become involved with teen parents somewhat after "the crisis" period had passed, might well adhere to a different model, perhaps one in which the value of long-term services and support was emphasized. We were curious to examine the effects, if any, of a longer-term approach.

Since community-based programs are out in the community, we were particularly interested in discovering whether they, more than the school-based programs we had visited, focused their resources and goals on the development and use of vocational education and job training opportunities for their enrollees. In school-based programs, we had discovered that vocational education often took a back seat to parenting education and progress toward high school graduation; we wondered if community-based programs achieved a different balance among these goals.

We visited a small number of community-based programs to supplement our school-based and school-sponsored program sample and to allow us to pursue some of these issues. The goals of our investigation of community-based programs were to:

1. Assess the degree to which their enrollee populations differ from those of the school-based programs. In particular, we wanted to determine the extent to which they serve dropouts and how these dropouts come to be involved in program activities.
2. Examine program models, exploring in particular whether community-based programs provide more flexibility in terms of program model and program activities.
3. Explore whether community-based programs appear to be more closely linked to other community resources available to teen parents. If this is the case, what is it that promotes such linkages?
4. Determine the degree to which community-based programs balance education, support, and vocational education and job training.

THE COMMUNITY PROGRAM SAMPLE

The seven programs discussed in this section were selected at two different points in the study. Four were selected earlier, as part of the initial fieldwork sample. Our discussion of these four programs in Secs. 2–3 focused on the educational services that these programs provide. In this section, we include a discussion of the community component of each of these four programs, and discuss them along with the three "pure" community programs, which were selected later. The selection of each of these subsamples is discussed in turn in Sec. 1.

Given limited resources, our community sample was necessarily small and our visits brief.[1] However, we did attempt to ensure that taken together, the three newly selected programs and the four previously selected ones provided a range of vocational education opportunities to program enrollees. In our sample of seven programs, five indicated that they provide specific job skills, training, and guidance, and two programs provide work socialization or guidance only.

FIELDWORK

RAND staff members visited each of the three new programs for one to three days. A total of 39 respondents were interviewed on-site. These interviews were conducted with program directors, counselors, teachers, enrollees, and juvenile court personnel who worked with the program and welfare department.

Field staff used open-ended field interview guides in the three new programs, similar to those used for the school-based programs. On average, interviews lasted one hour. Interviews focused on the goals and operations of the program, the provision of vocational education, and the vocational opportunities available to enrollees, both within and outside the program. Considerable time was spent during each visit observing program operations.

---

[1] Because of the shortness of our visits, we did not interview any program enrollees.

At the conclusion of the fieldwork, a case study was written for each program that followed closely the outline for the school-based program case studies to ensure that reports contained comparable information that allowed for comparisons across programs.

SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE ANALYSIS

This section summarizes and synthesizes the case studies written by site visitors to the three community-based programs, and incorporates community elements from the four community-based programs discussed in the school programs sections as well. The findings presented here are those that appear most consistently and compellingly across the case studies, although findings unique to a particular program or program type are often noted as such.

In Sec. 1 we discussed the limitations of our analysis of the school-sponsored programs, which included the lack of representativeness of the sample and the fact that we did not attempt to give equal weight to the case study material in our analysis or conclusions. A third limitation must be added to this section: the fact that four of the programs discussed were already included in the school-sponsored programs sections.

Although we focus our analyses on the three new programs, and limit the analysis of the four previously discussed programs to their community-relevant aspects, it is critical that the reader keep in mind that Secs. 2–4 do not treat independent samples.

PROGRAM IMPETUS

Most of the programs were started to promote economic self-sufficiency in young mothers. In two cases the impetus came from external funding sources. In one case the request was made to an existing community-based organization (CBO); in the second, a new organization was formed. More typically, the push came from CBO staff who perceived a need among their current clientele or in the community at large. When programs were established within existing CBOs, organizational support was derived from the compatibility of program and CBO goals, e.g., serving women in the community. In one CBO, support for the program was particularly strong because existing programs, targeted to more affluent women, were undersubscribed, and staff felt that the organization needed a new mission.

Unlike the school-based programs, none of the "pure" community programs at first espoused educational goals. In each case, program planners took on larger goals, such as economic self-sufficiency and improved life circumstances. However, these larger goals logically included educational ones. Ultimately, the programs found themselves devoting large amounts of time and resources to educational services, as discussed below.

PROGRAM MODELS

Community programs do not face the limit inherent in school-based programs—that a teen parent must leave when she reaches school-leaving age or when she graduates. Indeed, in our seven community programs, we found more flexibility with regard to how long teen mothers could remain in the program. Although most imposed some limit on time in the program, these limits tended to be considerably longer than those imposed by the school-based programs. But limits as long as a year or 18 months were still viewed by some staff as overly rigid. Noting that enrollees came from very deprived backgrounds and received little family support, the case managers in one community program agreed that the ideal program needs to provide general and vocational education and to provide it within an extended, even open-ended, time frame—one that allows for entry, failure, reentry, failure, reentry, and, hopefully, the eventual acquisition of marketable skills.

The three "pure" community-based programs that we visited were less likely to adhere to the crisis model than the four programs with heavy school involvement. As shown in Table 4.1, these "pure" community-based programs provided either sequential services, where enrollees moved from the program to an adult jobs-training program, or long-term case management services, in which enrollees were linked as needed to a range of community services, including educational services (usually GED preparation). The former two programs had established time limits for remaining in the program; the latter had not.

Table 4.1

Characteristics of Community Programs Visited

		Program Characteristics	
Program Model	N	Enrollment Period	Population Served
Crisis/comprehensive services	3***	No limit (two programs); short term only (1 program)	School-aged pregnant and parenting teens enrolled in school
Short-term/limited services	1*	Extended time allowed but rarely used	School-aged parents enrolled in school
Sequential	2	Time limits—12 and 18 months	Teen parents
Long-term case management	1	Unlimited	Teen parents and other welfare mothers

NOTE: Each asterisk indicates a program discussed in Secs. 2–3.

The crisis model did not characterize any of the "pure" programs; eligibility did not commence at the time that a pregnancy was revealed and end soon after delivery. However, like the school-sponsored programs, these "pure" community programs attempted to provide teen parents everything they needed—educational remediation, counseling and support, work education and job training, and an understanding of the resources they could use in the future—in a brief, prespecified period. They could not offer the luxury of self-paced, open-ended learning to their enrollees; even in the sequential programs, limited time was provided for the acquisition of specific skills (e.g., completion of a diploma or the GED).

PROGRAM GOALS

To a substantial degree, the community programs share the same overarching goals for teen parents as the school-based ones. In every one, long-term goals include high school completion, parenting skills, and economic self-sufficiency. In the short term, the programs focus on school completion and parenting skills. Only those programs that receive outside funds that mandate job-skills training and set up job placement as a program outcome devote substantial time to these latter goals, as discussed below.

Although community-based programs share an educational emphasis with school-based programs, the community-based programs are more willing than the schools to promote the GED. They do so because the GED preparation is self-paced, so enrollees can both gauge and accelerate their own progress. Consequently, a motivated person with sufficient skills can move quickly through the program. These features are widely viewed as critical, since program staff believe that they cannot assume substantial academic commitment on the part of program enrollees, many of whom are school dropouts. Education is often perceived strictly as a means to an end: employability. The GED can get them there faster and with fewer obstacles on the way.[2]

Of the seven community-based programs that we visited, three helped enrollees to get GEDs, one offered enrollees a choice of GED preparation or enrollment in a diploma-granting program, and the remainder promoted high school completion. These latter two programs were those most closely linked with the schools. In one of these programs, in fact, the program provided child care adjacent to the regular school site so that teen parents could remain in the regular high school. In a second, district teachers came to the program site to provide diploma-oriented instruction.

Five of the seven community-based programs that we visited regard the development of parenting competency as one of its major program goals. Such an emphasis was surprising on two counts. First, the average age of program enrollees in the community-based programs is higher than that in the school-based programs, as discussed below. One might expect that parenting education would be considered less urgent in these older populations for maturational reasons. Second, since most of the programs enroll dropouts, who typically left school in response to their pregnancy and may have remained out of school for some time, their children are older. The ideal moment to provide parenting education, much of which is focused on imparting bare survival information, may have been presumed to have passed.

To some extent, the primacy of educational and parenting goals reflects the short-term nature of these programs. As discussed above, although most of these programs do not adhere to the crisis model, which assumes the period of pregnancy to be the critical period for intervention, time constraints on the period of program participation have forced programs to essentially create a hierarchy of needs and to focus on those at the base of that hierarchy. One program, for example, had hoped to focus a substantial amount of its efforts on job-skills training. It could not do so because of the very limited academic skills of program enrollees. Consequently, the program has focused much of its efforts on the acquisition of minimal reading and math skills.

A staff member in one of the few programs that permit teen parents to remain in the program as long as they wish had thought a good deal about the issue of time. She had concluded that the most sensible approach for teen parents is to focus on short-term goals with the aim of accomplishing longer-term ones one step at a time. In her program, this can be done within the program structure. In most, the program is forced to focus on the short-term goals and hope that the longer-term ones have become sufficiently inculcated that the teen mother will pursue them later, either on her own or in the context of another program.

---

[2] Those who support the obtainment of a diploma argue that, although the GED may be faster, it is less valued by employers. Indeed, the military services will no longer accept the GED in place of a high school diploma.

WHO IS SERVED

As we expected, the community-based programs have more diverse enrollee populations than the school-based programs. Diversity includes both enrollee age and school status, with enrollees in the community programs older on average and likely to be school dropouts. Higher average age occurs because only one of these programs includes junior high school aged teen parents, as some school-based programs do, and because some require that the teen parent be a school dropout. Dropouts rarely move directly into a program. Often, staff indicated, several years go by before program involvement is sought.

In general, the closer the community-based program to the schools, the more the program's enrollees resemble the school-based program population. The closeness of the match is best illustrated by the enrollees of one program included in Secs. 2–3, which provides child care on the site of a voc-tech center to teen parents who attend the collocated high school. Since the program provides only child care, and only to those teen parents attending regular school, program enrollees differ from other teen parents only in that they are unable to find child care elsewhere. (Of course, this may imply that they receive less family support, are living independently, or are married.) In contrast, in one program supported with welfare funds, enrollees must have left school, and some are well past school age. In another program located in a housing development, enrollees are eligible for services if they live in the project. Thus, enrollee age and past and present school involvement vary enormously.

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

The school-based programs that we visited devote little or no attention to issues of recruitment and retention, as discussed earlier. Indeed, most of the emphasis in this area is on monitoring adherence to often strict attendance requirements. When asked about recruitment, most program staff pointed to long waiting lists as the reason why recruiting is not done.

The community-based program approached recruitment and retention quite differently. Many staff recognized that unlike the schools, they could neither take enrollments for granted nor assume that enrollees would stay in the program once enrolled. In addition, several programs had a goal of involving young mothers who would not normally become involved. Consequently, they devoted considerable resources and thought to recruiting and satisfying enrollees. One program employed a full-time recruiter. A second extended full-time child care services to all program participants, even though most program activities did not require a full-time commitment. Program staff believed that this extra child care—which allowed mothers to shop alone or just be alone—constituted an important program benefit for women who could not afford sitters.

In this same program, a drop-in center dedicated to teenage mothers had been established to provide a place for young mothers to go who could not or would not begin a more structured program. The hope was that through the center, some teen mothers would progress to the formal program. But staff recognized that some teen mothers simply would not. These mothers, staff believed, would simply benefit from coming out of their apartments and meeting their peers. Considerable effort had been devoted to making the drop-in center really attractive and inviting; weekly lunches, a washer and dryer, a large play room, and an on-site coordinator increased its appeal.

SERVICES PROVIDED

The three "pure" programs provide a wealth of services to program clients. One program, which uses the case manager model, attempts to provide whatever enrollees need through links with existing community services. The other two programs provide comprehensive services—education, counseling, job skills, training, and guidance—through the program.

All of the programs located in the community provide more—and more intensive—educational services than they had originally intended. The educational emphasis expanded in each program because enrollees lacked the basic skills necessary to benefit from the training opportunities that formed a major component of each program's original plan. In one program, for example, the job-training component requires 6th grade reading and math skills, so the program began to emphasize remedial work at the 5th and 6th grade reading level. However, it soon became apparent that most enrollees could not benefit from *these* efforts: They needed classes targeted to 0–4th grade level. Said one program director, "When we drafted the proposal for the program, we set goals that we wanted them to achieve. But once the program was up and running, the first group of goals went out the window—we went down to *basics!*"

Getting down to basics involved efforts to integrate some job-skills training into the basic education classes that enrollees needed so badly. Staff hoped that such integration would hold the interest of enrollees who were attracted to the program as a means of obtaining job skills. They feared that a steady diet of remedial education would lead to wholesale defections, particularly as more and more enrollees tested at below 4th grade level in basic skills.

Program staff everywhere agreed that such integration is laudable but difficult to achieve, particularly if the program is time-limited. Time limitations, combined with strict definitions of positive program outcomes in some programs, make it difficult to devote the resources to remedial education that many enrollees need. In one program, for example, job placement (even in a minimum wage job) was a positive program outcome, but enrollment in a community college was not. Said a case manager in this program, "I often wonder if we are doing these kids a service. What they need is to be able to get into a community college and be really competitive. It might take four years (of remedial work) to get them to that point, but then they'd be able to make it. However, that would be considered a negative program outcome (in this program). On the other hand, a welfare-dependent, minimum wage job is considered a positive program outcome."

FLEXIBILITY OF SERVICES

School-based programs are to some degree constrained in terms of the nature and extent of the services that they can offer by their location and their institutional support. As discussed by Zellman (1981), school staff may resent any extra resources directed to teen parents, believing that they should be directed instead to students who have not compromised their potential through their own behavior. Moreover, schools are constrained by their public nature: The programs that they sponsor must avoid controversy. This mandate is of particular importance to programs serving teen parents, which may be controversial by their very nature. In addition, schools generally get into the business of serving teen parents through individual advocacy, not through institutional commitment: Few districts view services to teen parents as a primary mission. In many school districts, the teen parent program represents the district's sole response to teen parents (Adler, Bates, and Merdinger, 1985; Zellman, 1981).

In some contrast, community-based programs have generally taken on the mission of serving teen parents voluntarily. Once a commitment is made to serve this clientele, such organizations may have a clearer mandate to do what it takes to serve them well. Several community respondents noted, for example, that their organizations had changed their menu of services and mode of service delivery several times in response to teen parent feedback. In one program, for example, teen parents are accorded three educational options, each of which is popular with a particular group. Staff in this program noted that their program was special in that they did not stop with one "solution," but instead offered alternatives designed to suit the needs of very different teen parents. They contrasted their wide range of services with the limited options available to teen parents through the schools in their community. One respondent observed that in the schools, there is rarely a search for the best solution, nor are efforts usually made to provide several options; typically "a" program is set up and offered, and those teen parents who cannot use it simply do not.

Community-based organizations appear to be less constrained than schools about the use of funds and personnel. Said a staff member working in one of the smaller community-based programs, "We don't have (school) administrators looking over our shoulders all the time." Staff contend that less-intense supervision enables them to provide more services in more unique ways than school-based programs. Staff in a number of the programs that we visited reported that in contrast to the school-based teen parent programs in their communities, they are encouraged to innovate and to modify program structure and services as needed. For example, in one program the location of child care provided by the program was changed when staff discovered that enrollees were choosing not to use it because of its location on an adult school campus. Teens were uncomfortable with the older and heavily foreign (English as a Second Language (ESL) student) population. In another program, staff were able to quickly increase the number of GED slots when it became apparent that enrollees needed more educational services than first anticipated. In this case, good links to other community-based services and the fact that the program was not obligated to provide the service itself (as the schools might be) allowed this to happen quickly. In another program, staff believed that they had the freedom to operate the program pretty much as they saw fit. They described an instance that for them illustrated the constraints imposed by school involvement. In the course of their class on preparation for birth, the teen parents in this program had become very interested in what happened to babies who were stillborn. They asked if they could visit the morgue. When, as required, program staff asked for permission from the school district for the trip, they were told that such a visit was not on the list of approved field trips in the district. Staff noted that if the schools had not been involved in the program, they could have taken the girls without any problem.

A number of staff in community-based programs noted that their independence from the schools permitted them to both expand the range of their services and to make the kinds of "life style" suggestions and interventions that would not be possible in the school context. For example, one program had recently expanded its scope to include housing services for teen parents who were not welcome in their family homes and who could not afford or could not maintain an apartment of their own. Two programs had begun classes for grandparents, an idea that several school program staff had advanced, but which they could not accommodate in their school-based programs for one reason or another. In several programs, frank talk about birth control and family planning accompanied referrals to Planned Parenthood and other agencies.

Community-based programs are also more likely than the schools to attract the support of volunteers, who can dramatically expand program opportunities and resources. In one program, a local executive had single-handedly taken on the role of male mentor to the teen mothers, many of whom had never had a caring older man in their lives. Another program, part of a larger community organization, expected to reap considerable benefit from new efforts to organize a 400-member volunteer support group, some of whom would raise funds and devote time directly to the program. Finally, networking with other community agencies brought a range of professionals (e.g., nurses, family counselors) into several programs.

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

As discussed above, we endeavored to select programs with a strong vocational education and training focus. This focus did not, however, translate into readily accessible vocational education in many cases. In five of our seven community-based programs, vocational education opportunities are located exclusively off-site. In two of these programs, there is no transportation available; in a third, the program provides tokens for public transportation to vocational education settings. In the two programs without vocational education access, staff were fairly comfortable with that situation. Most believed that vocational education was or should be a secondary concern, given the very limited academic skills of program enrollees. These staff clearly saw vocational education as coming later in their enrollees' lives, after a diploma or GED, and in fact they worried that if vocational education became too important, it might represent a diversion from school completion.

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION USE

As discussed in Sec. 3, even when vocational opportunities are available, they may not be used by teen parents. In the context of school-based programs, we found that vocational education was much less likely to be used if the opportunities were located outside the program, even if the program was collocated with another program that provided vocational education services. We speculated then that leaving the program imposed costs on teen parents that they were unwilling or unable to shoulder, including time on buses, difficulties in coordinating their schedules, and the need to mix with nonparenting students.

Although we expected that these costs would hold as well in community-based programs, we thought that because enrollees are typically older, they might be both less reluctant to mix with nonparenting peers and more work-oriented. Indeed, in those programs that provide services to teen parents of varying ages, staff noted that it was the older teen parents, aged 18 and above, who were more interested in and enthusiastic about vocational education.

Nevertheless, as shown in Table 4.2, a pattern of vocational education use similar to that found in the school-based programs appears to hold in the seven community-based programs we visited as well. When vocational education is available on-site, many enrollees participate in it. Co-site vocational education attracts fewer enrollees. And when the only opportunities are available off-site, participation is low, even when transportation is available.

Table 4.2

Use of Vocational Education Opportunities in Community-Based Programs

Location of Vocational Education	No. of Programs	Level of Enrollee Involvement		
		None	Some	Most/All
On-site	2			2 programs
Co-site	2		1 program*	1 program
Off-site	5	4 programs***	1 program	

NOTE: Each asterisk indicates a program discussed in Secs. 2–3.

As in the school-based programs, when employability is a clearly specified program goal, the likelihood that program enrollees will participate in vocational education is enhanced, as shown in Table 4.3. Our findings suggest that a clear employability goal may increase vocational education and job-training use in one of several ways. One way may involve how the program is evaluated. In two programs, a funding source required the articulation of such a goal and indicated that program evaluation would be based at least partly on job placement rates. In these programs, staff perceive that they have made a commitment to employability and encourage enrollees to make decisions to enhance this goal. Despite concerns that employability goals might undermine educational ones, staff actively encourage vocational education and work to reduce any obstacles to vocational education enrollment. It may also be that programs with clear employability goals attract enrollees who have made a personal commitment to job-skills training and employability, thus supporting the goal.

Employability goals may also gain support when program staff themselves choose them. Such staff support depends to a considerable extent on perceptions that there is sufficient time to provide enrollees with both job and educational skills. Such a condition existed in just one program in our sample. Here, enrollees could complete a GED or diploma, then begin job training, all under the aegis of the program within a case manager model. This program had no time limit, so choosing employability as a program goal was not perceived to compromise other goals that staff believed had to be achieved first, especially educational ones. Employability could both be a longer-term goal for teen mothers and remain a program goal.

The more time-limited programs did not have this luxury. Given a short time frame for each enrollee, staff in most programs believed that employability goals would have competed with educational ones. Since staff agreed that education had to come first, employability goals were not endorsed and vocational education was not encouraged.

Table 4.3

Vocational Education Use as a Function of Employability Goal

Use Level	Employability Goal	
	Yes	No
No use		2 programs**
Some use	1 program	1 program*
Most/all use	3 programs*	

NOTE: Each asterisk indicates a program discussed in Secs. 2–3.

CONCLUSIONS

Although community-based programs are generally begun with a somewhat different purpose than school-based ones, these programs have been forced to duplicate to a considerable extent what the schools do: provide educational programs in the service of academic skills development and school completion in a time-constrained program context.

As a result, the community programs do not differ from the school-based programs as much as one might expect. All have a significant educational component, which in some programs constitutes the major program element. At the same time, they are different. For one thing, they serve dropouts. Dropouts motivate programs to be responsive and inviting, since participation is voluntary. Staff are aware that enrollees, having dropped out once, cannot be assumed to be committed.[3] Some programs attempt to recruit clients, an activity unknown in school-based programs. One program in our sample even set up operations in a public housing project to "get them where they live."

More freedom to innovate helps community-based programs to serve a less-captive audience. Fewer rules and constraints and more community resources enable some programs to house program enrollees and engage substantial numbers of community volunteers in fund-raising and program operations.

Despite older enrollees and an impetus to promote economic self-sufficiency, vocational education is not the major thrust in these programs. In most cases, short time frames and educational deficiencies combine to compel an educational emphasis similar to that found in the school-based programs. However, in programs with a strong employability goal (backed up in some cases by funder evaluation requirements), vocational education was used to a much greater extent. These findings, combined with those in Sec. 3, suggest that vocational education use is enhanced by both the accessibility of vocational education services and program commitment to it as a major and measurable program outcome.

Such commitment to vocational education and employability is usually there at the outset in most community-based teen parent programs, but it is often diluted by the need to serve what are perceived to be more fundamental needs within a constrained time frame. Consequently, most programs adopt an implicit sequencing model, in which the program focuses limited resources on education and parenting. Employability skills training is encouraged but not actively pushed.

This sequencing notion of vocational education deserves attention, as it emerged as well in the school-based programs, where at least some staff regarded vocational education as more of a threat than a benefit to many school-aged teen mothers. It may well be that job-skills training is too much for a young mother who is barely literate, as staff frequently argue, but deferring vocational education to "later" is an inadequate response when later means "on your own" with no program support. Articulation with programs that can be begun once school goals are met, concrete career planning, and some attention to the possibility of integrating academic and vocational education opportunities within these programs are ways to help teen parents acquire both academic skills and credentials and job-related training, whether one adheres to a sequential or integrative model of skills acquisition.

---

[3] In JOBS-funded programs, lack of attendance may be sanctioned by reductions in welfare benefits, as discussed in Sec. 5.

5. FAMILY SUPPORT ACT IMPLEMENTATION AND EFFECTS

INTRODUCTION

The Family Support Act of 1988 (FSA), P.L. 100-485, is the latest in a series of welfare reform efforts.[1] It is designed to replace welfare benefits with employment for those receiving support under the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program. The act aims to reduce barriers to employment including lack of child care, marketable skills, work experience, transportation, and educational credentials by providing states with federal funds to support special services to targeted groups. Because most AFDC recipients are or were teen parents, its provisions are of particular interest to those concerned with this group.

In this section, we first briefly review the FSA, then examine data collected from the teen parent programs that we had visited earlier about its current and future effect. (See the appendix for a more detailed discussion of the FSA.)

PROVISIONS OF THE FAMILY SUPPORT ACT

The FSA requires that each state set up a Job Opportunities and Basic Skills (JOBS) program. The state must include certain components in its JOBS program: high school education or high school equivalency education; basic literacy education; education in English as a second language; jobs-skills training; job-readiness activities; and job-development and job-placement activities. There is no requirement that any particular component be available to all JOBS participants, or to any specific percentage of participants.

Under FSA requirements, most 16- and 17-year-olds must be assigned to educational activities (high school or its equivalent).[2] This requirement has aroused concern among some teen parent advocates, who worry that dropouts will be referred back to the same school programs that could not meet their needs earlier, setting them up for failure. Critics argue that the FSA should specify ways to educate teen parents so that they have some hope of succeeding in the educational programs that they are required to attend.[3]

In many respects, the supportive services mandated by the FSA are the most important feature of the act for teen parents. States are required to "guarantee" child care and transportation for any JOBS participants who are making "satisfactory progress," whether their participation is voluntary or mandatory.[4] It cannot require an individual to participate in JOBS if necessary child care is not available. This child care requirement has the potential to vastly increase the availability of scarce child care resources for teen parents. But such expansion is far from guaranteed; because of the tremendous discretion granted the states under JOBS, states may simply exempt teen parents from JOBS by declaring that child care and transportation are unavailable to them.

---

[1] The prior programs included the Community Work Experience Program and the Work Incentives Program. These programs, and the history leading up to the FSA, are described in Handler (1987).

[2] Teen parents under age 18 may be assigned to another activity if the parent is beyond the state's compulsory attendance age, if the decision is made on the basis of an individualized assessment not solely on grade completion, and if the state JOBS plan provides for participation in another educational activity or in skills training combined with education. Eighteen- and 19-year-olds can be assigned to an educational program or to work or other training if they fail to make good progress in school or if their participation in education is otherwise inappropriate.

[3] Greenberg and Levin-Epstein (1989), in a preliminary analysis of state plans for JOBS, found that states were not describing what kinds of education will be used for teens or decision rules about which programs to use when. These decisions, with a few exceptions, were left by states to local discretion.

[4] See the appendix, footnote 5, for a discussion of "satisfactory progress."

The FSA provides states with an opportunity to use JOBS funds to make teen parents a real priority. These funds could increase the availability of teen parent programs and could increase the supply of scarce infant care and other services. The JOBS program could also serve as a catalyst for reforming school programs to make them more responsive to the needs of teen parents.

Alternatively, states could choose not to make teen parents a high priority under JOBS. State plans could require only that teen dropouts be referred back to regular schools; no examination of the appropriateness of available school programs or of the reasons why so many teen parents leave them would be expected. Or, states could simply exempt teen parents from JOBS by declaring that child care and transportation are unavailable to them. Finally, states could use JOBS to punish teen parents by effectively refusing to provide child care to any teen parent with another family member at home, e.g., the teen parent's own parent, and by issuing sanctions for all teen parent dropouts who do not return to the school programs that they had left earlier.

What states decide to do probably will be heavily influenced by each state's willingness to spend funds on education and training and its attitude toward AFDC recipients and toward teen parents in particular. Since we had access to a number of teen parent programs at a time when JOBS was beginning to be implemented, we decided to conduct telephone interviews with those programs to see if we could learn something about how JOBS was being implemented in the context of teen parent programs and what expectations program staff had for JOBS.

FSA DATA

To explore the reality and the potential of the FSA, we conducted telephone interviews to address the following questions:

- To what extent are additional programs or services for teen parents being created as a result of the FSA?
- Is the priority status of teen parents under the FSA resulting in greater interest in them by JTPA or other service agencies?
- To what extent are the new requirements imposing costs on existing programs, e.g., additional paperwork, changes in the relationship between participants and staff?
- In what ways, if any, are the populations attending teen parent programs changing as a result of the FSA? To what extent are dropouts returning to school or other employment and training activities?
- What positive effects has the FSA had to date on these programs?
- To what extent are additional services (especially child care and transportation) being made available to teen parents under the FSA?
- To what extent are teen parents losing their welfare benefits because of refusal to participate in JOBS programs?
- What effects, if any, has the FSA had on the demand for or provision of vocational training in teen parent programs?

Methods

A total of 11 agencies, located in nine different counties and administering 13 programs, are described in this section.[5] Twelve of these programs were described in Secs. 2–4; the thirteenth, a private vocational college, was added here to compare JOBS' effect on it with its effect on agencies running teen parent programs in the same community.[6] For simplification, the 11 agencies administering teen parent programs are referred to in this section as "programs." Those described here are both school- and community-based and are located in areas ranging from very rural to inner city. One was located in a state that had not yet begun to implement its JOBS programs.

Project staff conducted telephone interviews during the spring of 1990 with teen parent program directors and with local welfare officials who worked with the selected programs. Welfare officials were asked about implementation of the JOBS program in the community. Teen parent program directors were questioned about the effects of the FSA and the state JOBS program on their participants and on program activities. Concurrently, information on the state-level administration of JOBS was gathered by project staff.[7]

We focused our interviews on the effects of the FSA on pregnant and parenting teens who are currently school-aged and on the programs that serve them. The FSA serves other teen parents as well, namely, older teens who are parents and older women who became parents while they were still teens. In some cases these two other groups of mothers are discussed as a means of drawing comparisons with younger teen parents.

Findings

State programs. Fifteen states were approved to begin JOBS programs in July 1989; of these, three were in our study sample. Ten more states and the Virgin Islands were approved for JOBS funds in October 1989, and of these, two were our sample states. The remaining states planned to have programs by the October 1990 deadline; two of these are also our sample states (Center on Social Welfare Policy and Law, 1989). About half the states in our sample use different names for their teen and adult versions of JOBS; some use the same name, and others do not have separate programs for teens and adults.

Consistent with the wide discretion accorded states under the FSA, the states in our sample chose to serve teens very differently. Two of our seven sample states had not begun their JOBS programs at the time of our interviews, and target groups for receiving benefits or being required to participate were not yet clearly defined. Of the remaining five sample states, three chose to serve only those teen parents under age 18 who had dropped out of school, as shown in Table 5.1. Two of these three states directed dropouts into alternative education programs for GEDs, bypassing the regular education system. The other state specified the conditions under which teens would go to alternative programs. In all three of these states, school-age parenting teens continuously enrolled in school programs receive no ancillary support from JOBS, although the FSA has provisions that permit volunteers to receive such services, as described above. In one community, JOBS funded ancillary services for older teen parents who enrolled themselves in college-level training programs. However, JOBS would not pay tuition for these self-starters, as they were not considered dropouts. In these three states, which use FSA money to serve dropouts only, it is economically smarter for a teen to drop out of school and wait to be referred to a special program; in this way, ancillary services and tuition appear to be paid.[8]

---

[5] When a single community agency operated separate programs for teen parents (differing in goals and clientele), these programs were described separately in previous sections. In this section, we are interested in relationships between agencies that run teen parent programs and the welfare staff who administer JOBS. For this reason, separate programs run by one agency are considered together.

[6] Two of the programs described above were not interviewed about the FSA. In one case, the program was the second part of a sequential program and served few school-aged teen mothers. In the second, the program had not yet had any dealings with JOBS because it was committed to filling scarce program slots from an existing waiting list.

[7] These data were supplemented with unpublished state-level data collected by the National Center for Research in Vocational Education.

The two remaining states in our sample of seven require any teen parent age 16 or older with a child at least three months old to participate in JOBS, even though the federal statute exempts full-time students. If the teen does not have a high school diploma or equivalent, she is sent to the teen version of JOBS, which promotes educational programs. If the teen has a diploma (or GED), she is sent to the adult version for employment development.

The teen versions of JOBS that we saw in these states offered many program choices to participants. Teens could be referred to a variety of programs in the community—from regular high schools to adult schools to the special comprehensive programs for teen parents that we had studied. Of course, we were interviewing in communities that were considered exemplary for their services to teen parents; it is likely that in other communities teen JOBS participants have more constrained program choices. Our respondents told us that in many of these latter communities, the regular school system is the only option.

The FSA set teen parents apart from the general public by including more stringent requirements for this group. In particular, the legislation required teen parents to participate in JOBS regardless of the age of the teen's child.[9] In spite of this provision, two of our sample states specified that mandatory participation for teens would begin only after the baby was three months old. In the three states without a specified age for a teen's child, teen parents were expected to participate even if the child was younger than three months, as shown in Table 5.1. One provision in the FSA legislation allows both teens and adults not to participate if they must stay at home to care for an incapacitated child. Respondents reported that many teens have been excused from JOBS participation for this reason.

Of the 11 teen parent programs interviewed for this section, one was located in a state that had not yet implemented its JOBS program. Of the remaining ten programs, seven were officially working with the local version of JOBS by the spring of 1990, when we conducted our interviews (see Table 5.2). One of these programs was a private vocational college that served young women who were considered "voluntary" JOBS participants because they had enrolled on their own in the college. These voluntary participants were receiving child care and transportation benefits under JOBS.[10] This college has an official contract with the local welfare office and can accept

---

[8] There was no evidence that such deliberate dropping out was occurring in our sample communities from these three states. However, tracking dropouts is very inexact, leaving this issue largely unexplored.

[9] Parents 20 and older receiving AFDC benefits are required to participate in JOBS if they have a child over the age of three (or over the age of one, at the state's option). In contrast, teen parents age 16–19 receiving AFDC benefits who do not have a high school diploma must participate in educational training activities regardless of their child's age. (See the appendix for further discussion of this requirement.)

[10] This is consistent with federal regulations, which provide that persons who are in "self-initiated education or training" in an institution of higher education are eligible for child care, transportation, and other supportive services, but the cost of the tuition is not federally reimbursible. The state is permitted to limit the use of post-secondary education but must do so in its state JOBS plan.

Table 5.1

State-Level JOBS Programs in the Seven Sampled States

	Serves Only Dropout Teen Parents Younger than 18	Teen Need Not Enroll in JOBS Until Child > 3 Months Old
Yes	3	2
No	2	3
Not applicable/no program yet	2	2

Table 5.2

Effects of JOBS on Teen Parent Programs

Program Number	Teen Parent Program Works with JOBS	JOBS Provides Funds to Teen Parent Program	Teen Parent Program Has New Services as a Result of JOBS
1	Yes, formally	Yes	Child care for a broader age range
2	Yes, formally	Yes	On-site clinic, housing, case managers, more generous child care and transport, additional enrollees[a]
3	Yes, formally	Yes	None
4	Yes, formally	No	None
5	Yes, formally	No	None
6	Yes, formally	No	None
7	Yes, formally	No	None
8	Yes, informally	No	None
9	Yes, informally	No	None
10	No	No	None
11	(b)	(b)	(b)

[a] Program receives funds from other sources besides JOBS. Information on the proportion of funds provided by each such source was not available.

[b] No JOBS program in this state at time of interview.

mandatory JOBS participants (those who have been out of school and who have not enrolled themselves in an employment and training program), but at the time of our interviews, the college had received only one referral from the welfare office. Two teen parent programs located in other states had one or two JOBS participants enrolled in the program but served these teens informally without any official contract with the local welfare agency. Another program had no contact with the welfare office and served a different population—girls that were pregnant or only a few weeks postpartum.

In the communities investigated, no new programs for teen parents had been created by JOBS. This finding is consistent with results from other studies (see McDonnell and Grubb, 1991, for example) which find that, in general, welfare offices rely on preexisting community agencies to provide services to welfare program participants. In particular, we found heavy reliance on regular schools (without special supports) or adult basic education (through evening schools) for teen parent JOBS participants, even when an exemplary teen parent program existed in the community.

Part of the reason that exemplary or special programs are not used more heavily for referrals may have to do with welfare officials' sense of their task and goals. A number of the welfare staff we interviewed indicated that their responsibility was limited to ensuring that the participant was enrolled in a program and participating according to standard. Similar to findings of other researchers (such as Figueroa, 1990), they typically believed that the specifics of service provision were the domain of service providers. In their view, schools or other service providers, not welfare staff, should worry about whether teen parents' needs were being met and whether special programs were necessary.

Consistent with the above, we found that welfare staff typically refer teen parents to regular schools or teen parent programs without knowing or investigating how the teens are served. Typically, welfare officials had met with school officials early in the implementation of the JOBS program; in some communities these officials would continue to have some kind of relationship with the schools. Most often, these continuing relationships were limited to discussions of particular participants' attendance problems.[11] School officials in most of the communities we studied reported only attendance or achievements of participants to the welfare officials; nothing was reported on activities, program goals, or an individuals' unmet needs. This limited focus seems to support concerns of teen advocates (described above) that inadequate attention is given in JOBS to the increased risk of school dropout that teen parents face. Because JOBS requires regular attendance, some welfare departments are taking the position that a teen referred to these settings would be subject to sanctions for poor attendance. This limited focus on attendance may obscure the fact that inadequate program or support services (e.g., child care, transportation, flexible scheduling) are available.

Only three teen parent programs of the 11 interviewed receive regular funds from the local JOBS program. In two of these programs, JOBS money increased services, as shown in Table 5.2. The first receives these funds to pay for participants' child care; this funding has allowed the program to expand infant care services. The other two programs are located in a state that now funds all teen parent programs with JOBS money. Many programs in this state, including the two in our sample, continue to receive financial support and have relationships with other funding sources, such as New Chance, as well. Staff in one of these programs reported that the addition of JOBS funding had had no effect on program services. The other listed a number of new services implemented since the advent of JOBS funding and indicated that the program will be able to accept a larger client load in the coming year as a result of funding support through JOBS.

We also examined whether the FSA had increased community awareness of the problems facing teen parents and the special service needs that they might have. Directors of teen parent programs everywhere felt that JOBS had not had any impact on community attitudes toward teen parents and noted no changes in activity among agencies that serve them (e.g., JTPA). In one case, program staff complained that they were unable to get JTPA to pay any attention to teen parents; JOBS had not changed this. In other sites, the local JTPA and other community groups were described as already aware of teen parent concerns, so that the FSA had had little effect for that reason.

---

[11] In a few of the communities in which we interviewed, JOBS staff were more involved with community agency staff, and their efforts were praised by local teen parent program directors.

Effects on Programs

The number of teen parents served jointly by teen parent programs and JOBS ranged considerably. In two programs (one state) all teen parents had to be eligible for JOBS to be served by the program in which we interviewed. In three other programs (in two other states), JOBS participants constituted between 25 percent and 85 percent of program enrollments, as shown in Table 5.3. The remaining programs served few if any JOBS participants for several reasons: (1) there was no local JOBS program; (2) the teen parent program was designed for pregnant teens whereas JOBS is for parents; (3) the local JOBS program concentrated on dropouts, and teen parents in the program were considered "in school"; (4) the local JOBS administration had not yet executed a formal contract with the teen parent program in which we interviewed and had sent no referrals to the program; or (5) teen parents enrolled in the program were largely ineligible for JOBS because of family income levels.

Table 5.3

Proportion of Teen Parent Enrollees Participating in JOBS

Proportion	No. of Programs
All	2
More than half	1
Some	2
Few to none	5
No JOBS program in the state at the time of interview	1

Of the ten teen parent programs located in states that had implemented JOBS, five reported no effect of JOBS on their operations. These five, as noted above, served no or few young mothers enrolled in JOBS programs and had little contact with welfare officials. Staff in one of these programs believed that although JOBS had had no effect on their program, their program had had an effect on the local JOBS program for teens. Since the program served teen parents before they became JOBS participants, they enrolled in JOBS better prepared for job-skills acquisition and employment. Four other programs worked closely with the local JOBS program but still claimed few changes in their program as a result; these were located in two states with preexisting workfare/learnfare programs, which later incorporated JOBS requirements. Working relationships between welfare officials and the program had previously been established, programs were historically mutually supportive, and cross-referrals were common. The tenth program worked only occasionally with local JOBS officials; the program and JOBS served the same clientele, but staff rarely spoke with each other. Program staff anticipated few, if any, future changes to the program as a result of JOBS.

Some critics of the FSA have worried that JOBS' monitoring requirements would put an excessive burden on the staff of programs serving JOBS participants, or might force them to function as police, monitoring and reporting attendance and progress to welfare staff as a means of operating sanction systems. We did not find this to be the case among programs in our sample. Some program staff mentioned that they were now required to monitor attendance or activities of JOBS participants, but they all trivialized this task, making such comments as "it takes very little time and usually only one staff person" (for example, one hour of one person per week or month); and "we always did such monitoring for all participants anyway." Some felt, as one staff member described, that such monitoring was a "good handle on the girls." No program staff noted any change in staff relationships with program enrollees as a result of JOBS. One program did say that clients sent from JOBS to the program were often initially hostile and suspicious. Staff claimed these hostilities were erased, however, once participants saw what the program offered.

Enrollments had not increased in any of the programs as a result of JOBS, although one program given JOBS funds will be able to expand client populations from 36 to 50 participants in the coming year. Two other programs anticipate larger numbers in the coming year but not because of the FSA. They are located in a state where a new state law mandates that teen parent programs become entitlements to teens who are pregnant. A fourth program did anticipate long waiting lists as a result of JOBS education requirements and limited education staff.

Recruitment methods in the programs have remained largely the same as before JOBS funds became available; recruitment has changed in only one program because of JOBS. This program was able to eliminate a full-time recruiter position and rely only on referrals from the JOBS administrative office. One additional program reported that although recruitment methods have not changed under JOBS, many participants are now inconvenienced because they must go back and forth between the program and the JOBS office to make their joint participation official.

Only one program noted a change in the hours required for a program activity as a result of the FSA. In this program, a literacy course was required to expand instruction time from three hours to four hours daily so that students could receive the 20 hours of instruction per week required by JOBS. The literacy program had previously offered two three-hour sections per day, allowing teachers an hour break for lunch and an hour for preparation and grading. The new hours meant that teachers had to teach two courses per day, back-to-back, for a total of eight hours. Teachers now had to do preparation and grading on their own time, which the program director anticipated would soon cause problems.

A second program altered its goals in response to the FSA. Although this program had never offered long-term services, it had hoped to do so some day. However, the staff believed that such a long-term program now would be impossible with JOBS funding, which they described as emphasizing rapid job placement over longer-term training.

Few programs noted changes in the mix of clients they serve as a result of the FSA; this is mostly because few programs were actively working with JOBS programs and JOBS participants. In a few programs, however, there were some changes. Some now serve more minorities, dropouts, or older teens; some serve more teen parents who are less motivated and have lower skill levels. Staff in these programs believe that serving more dropouts and older, less-skilled participants was creating additional challenges. One director stressed that dropouts were more difficult to retain; another director mentioned that her older teens were less optimistic and needed more guidance and counseling in the program. The vocational college serving older teen parents noted that new participants were coming in less motivated; staff felt that JOBS participants were enrolling only to avoid going on job search. College staff believed that these were poor candidates for their services because the job training they provided required a desire to both learn and work that was not exhibited by these participants. Several respondents worried that working with "less-successful" enrollees might reduce staff morale over time.

Attitudes

Staff in all programs who were familiar with JOBS felt positively about the FSA, citing the benefits JOBS offered participants, especially the extra services, attention, and guidance. Most respondents claimed that their programs and JOBS were mutually reinforcing. Programs located where their clients were excluded from JOBS said they would like to see teen parents volunteer for the JOBS program so that they could receive the ancillary supports that JOBS makes available and which may not be available elsewhere. Most believed that JOBS could play a large role in keeping parenting teens in school and preventing dropout by providing these services. Another contribution, noted by several teen parent program directors, is found in the new role of JOBS staff; they can reinforce the message the programs try to convey—that education and training are important and that teen parents can become self-sufficient. A few program directors were less enthusiastic about JOBS; they believed that JOBS and all its benefits represented only an additional way to reach previously established program goals. Further, several noted that this new approach remains untested. Said one of these directors, "JOBS could be good, but it still must prove itself." Two program directors noted that JOBS' special contribution is in continuing to provide services to teen parents once they leave time-limited teen parent programs. Such long-term support, as noted above, is generally unavailable from school or community programs.

One program director said that the FSA provisions that allow the state to get money from absentee fathers were a more important part of the act for her teens than the JOBS programming itself. Interestingly, similar federal legislation has been in effect since 1975[12] and the local welfare office has been mandated since then to seek support from absent parents. The fact that many of the teen mothers in her program were now able to receive child support services probably reflects a change in local welfare office practice. In spite of criticisms that "JOBS just took old stuff and repackaged it," the new packaging may in fact be having an effect.

Overall, few JOBS-related complaints were reported by program respondents; most concerns were specific to the way JOBS was implemented in the state or in the local area. For example, one program director voiced support for sanctions, which are not allowed in her state. She believes that many teen parents need a push to do something about their lives, and sanctions are a great way to give that push. She feels sanctions are particularly important for teens because it is at this time that development is so crucial and remaining isolated at home is so detrimental.

Nevertheless, complaints were frequently voiced about JOBS' eligibility requirements. Many program staff were unhappy when their clients were unable to receive the benefits of JOBS because they were too young or had not yet delivered. Staff were particularly upset when enrollees were excluded for being self-initiators, or for never having dropped out of school.[13] With such a system, there is no reward for hanging in, overcoming obstacles, and taking care of oneself, they argued. One program director wanted her state AFDC program to provide separate grants to teen parents who are under age 18 and are not living with or supported by their parents. The local welfare office does not permit these young mothers to get independent AFDC grants, claiming parents' income is too high, despite the fact that these girls receive no help from them.[14] Without an AFDC grant, these teen mothers are not eligible for JOBS services. Other problems, encountered in a state serving only those teens who were dropouts, were found in the local welfare office's implementation of the state program. Older teen parents were sent to the local JTPA office for training programs; teen parents younger than age 16 were referred back into schools for their JOBS participation. The older teens took a GED test as part of the JTPA training program but received no classroom preparation for the test. One program staffer felt that this system set the older teens up for failure. With the younger teens, the JOBS staff was having difficulty finding placements in local schools; many principals refused to take these dropouts back. A special program for pregnant and parenting teens, which received some JOBS funding, also refused to take referrals, saying the program was full beyond capacity. JOBS had not created any other services locally so was forced to use the imperfect school and JTPA options. It is interesting that schools in this state receive money from JOBS through the Department of Education. These monies are apparently given without a mandate that schools receiving them participate in enrolling JOBS participants. The degree to which the school portion of JOBS money actually goes to JOBS participants may depend on the local commitment to integrate welfare, school, and job development efforts.

---

[12] Title IV-D of the Social Security Act, 42 U.S.C. 651 et seq., requires that each state operate a Child Support Enforcement Program and establish paternity and enforce child support obligations for all AFDC recipients and for any nonwelfare families who request assistance. Although the FSA strengthened those provisions, the state has been required to take these actions since 1975. All AFDC recipients are required to cooperate with child support enforcement actions unless they have "good cause" (which is narrowly defined). As long as the child is receiving AFDC, the support payments go to the state to reimburse it for the welfare benefits; the family receives a maximum of $50 each month as a "pass-through" if timely support payments are made. The "pass-through" is intended as an incentive for cooperation.

[13] Teen parents who remain in school and do not drop out, in spite of being young parents, are handicapped in states where the JOBS program has chosen to serve only teens who do not remain in school.

There were concerns expressed by a few respondents about the compatibility of JOBS and teen parent program goals. As discussed above, one director fears that JOBS will force her program to change its eventual emphasis from in-depth job preparation and training to the GED and rapid job placement. She worries that welfare officials will limit the time a teen parent can be served in the program, might specify performance goals promoting quick jobs rather than in-depth training, or limit the funds that can be spent per teen parent, thus forcing the less-expensive push for a quick job. Such coercion could be powerful in this teen parent program because it is funded mostly by JOBS; other programs that receive more limited JOBS funds would be less likely to have program goals and operations threatened by such regulations.

Vocational education and training may be compromised by JOBS in other ways as well. The same director noted one negative change with regard to work experience that has already occurred as a result of JOBS. Previously, teen parent enrollees were given a relatively high stipend (more than minimum wage) when they worked at jobs in her community. With JOBS, the stipend has been eliminated and minimum wage has been substituted. Additionally, teen parents on work experience lose the child care and transport subsidies they would receive by remaining on-site in the program. Consequently, enrollments in work experience through the program have declined; the director feels that enrollees are losing a valuable part of their employment preparation training.

---

[14] This is probably illegal. The FSA permits states, as an option, to deny AFDC benefits to pregnant and parenting teens under 18 who have never married, and who are not living with their parents, unless they are living in another adult-supervised situation. However, there are a series of exceptions for teens, e.g., whose parents are not living or whose whereabouts are unknown; whose parents do not permit them to live at home; whose physical or emotional health or safety would be jeopardized by living with their parents; who lived apart from their parents for one year before the birth of the child or before their application for AFDC benefits; or who otherwise have "good cause."

The federal implementing regulations are not yet in place, and it is likely that states are not properly implementing this option in their absence. The most likely explanation for the denial of benefits to these teens is that the local welfare office is misapplying the "grandparent deeming" provision, which requires states to count the income of teen parents' parents, if the teen parent is under age 18, and if she and her child are living with her parents now (42 U.S.C. 602(a) 39).

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

One final problem with JOBS reported by teen parent program staff was repeated difficulties in getting information from welfare offices about JOBS programs. Central information lines at the welfare offices were often not answered, or the receptionist/operator was unaware of JOBS and unable to transfer the call to an appropriate staff member.[15] These access problems made it clear that teens must be unusually tenacious or have outside help to get help from the system.

Respondents anticipate additional problems with information and data access down the line. Few data are being collected about JOBS program implementation; respondents were unable to answer a number of our questions because they had not been monitoring the effect of JOBS.

Effect on Enrollees

Because research staff did not conduct telephone interviews with teen participants about the effect of JOBS, we cannot discuss in detail the effects of the FSA and JOBS on this group. From the data that were gathered from teen parent program and welfare office staff, there are, however, some indications of effects; these are discussed below.

Virtually all school-aged parents involved with JOBS are pursuing diplomas or GEDs, usually exclusively, or in some instances, along with vocational training. The JOBS emphasis on basic education for teens was clearly evident in the universal response from teen parent program heads that JOBS had created no new interest in vocational education among participants. The primary goal of JOBS participants is to get diplomas or GEDs, not unlike other program enrollees. Two of the programs, serving dropouts only, always focused on vocational education and training and they found that there was no hoped-for additional interest among enrollees in vocational preparation because of JOBS—only the same level as before. If the goal of JOBS is to encourage vocational training among eligible school-aged mothers, more thought must be given to how to do this given its educational emphasis and the short-term teen parent programs in which it may operate.

In the eight communities operating JOBS programs, five welfare offices disburse funds for child care and transport by giving the money directly to teen parents when they come into the JOBS office. One community uses this contact as a check on participation; the teen has to bring proof of regular attendance in her education program to receive money for the ancillary support services. The three remaining JOBS programs make child care and transport money available to programs serving the teens, although in all of these communities, individual teens can receive the funds themselves by special arrangement. In some cases money is provided for local bus transportation; in other communities private car expenses or public transportation costs are covered. Child care was usually described as center-based care, although some welfare staff would not specify the kinds of care they covered, saying instead that coverage was based on need.[16] We were unable to ascertain the proportion of JOBS participants receiving ancillary services, since these data were not being recorded, nor could we get clear descriptions of what precisely was being provided. We are unable, therefore, to determine whether any of the states in our sample are holding back in providing benefits or whether they are skimping on costs by pushing less costly alternatives such as family member child care, as FSA critics fear. Our data do, however, suggest that coverage is less than 100 percent.

---

[15] RAND research staff experience was consistent with these complaints; in response to requests to speak with JOBS staff they were on occasion given referrals to outside agencies completely unconnected to welfare and JOBS.

[16] The states have a wide variety of choices about how to provide child care under the FSA. HHS expressly rejected proposals that would have required states to provide on-site day care for the children of teen parents, choosing instead to allow states more discretion in providing child care. (See the appendix for additional discussion of this point.)

Teen parent program staff were generally uninformed about the operation and application of sanctions. Program staff generally did not know whether a particular teen had been sanctioned or what the precise sanction was. In the absence of this knowledge, many claimed there were none. In actuality, one state in our sample mandated sanctions for its teen participants but was taken to court for doing so. Another state in our sample offers sanctions as the other side to its incentive program. When teens participate according to standard, they are rewarded with an additional sum in their AFDC check; when participation is inadequate, the same amount is subtracted from the usual AFDC grant. In spite of the provision of bonuses to participating teens, sanctions are being applied to a large number of teens at any one time in this state. For example, welfare officials in one community told us that 500 teens were registered for the JOBS program, but of these 500, only 150 were participating in school programs at any point in time, leaving 350 teens at risk of being sanctioned.

Nor were welfare officials working with JOBS able to provide us data on the numbers of teens who had been sanctioned. In the case of welfare staff, the sanctions that they may have recommended are often applied to the teens' checks through a different branch of the welfare system—the AFDC caseworkers. Communication between the two branches was apparently not very good. Not all states have implemented sanctions in the same way, and many have not completely decided how to handle teens who demonstrate inadequate participation.

Two other programs in our sample were located in a state with vague rules regarding teen sanctions; de facto sanctions developed so that when teens failed to participate in the teen parent programs, they were moved to another program within JOBS, usually to community work experience. Four other programs were located in two states where JOBS focused only on teen dropouts; teens who had been dropouts and now participated in JOBS alongside adults were subject to the maximum sanction allowable—loss of their portion of the family's AFDC grant.

These difficulties in tracking sanctions among teen JOBS participants will probably persist. HHS is not requiring states to collect or report data on the number of cases in which sanctions have been applied, and as we found, few teen parent or local JOBS programs are stepping in to fill the gap.

We attempted to determine whether the FSA was creating service opportunities for teen parent dropouts—a group that is often ignored. Dropouts are not served by school programs for parenting teens, as discussed above, and there are often no other programs within a community. In two of the sampled teen parent programs, staff indicated that dropouts were more likely to request services than in the past as a result of JOBS referrals. Three other programs serve dropouts exclusively, before and since JOBS, and as a result noted no change in the percentage of dropouts as a result of the FSA. One other program served dropouts, but they were excluded from JOBS because they were enrolled in the teen parent program, which was considered part of the school system. In a catch-22 situation, any dropouts who returned to school via the teen parent program were considered to have re-enrolled in school and were therefore exempt from mandatory participation. The remaining programs in our sample reported no change in the proportion of dropouts coming in to be served, as they either served none or did not record dropout status. Where dropouts are not served by teen parent programs, those required by JOBS to enter programs are entering adult GED classes or skipping to employment development. The effect of

JOBS on dropouts depends, then, on the local availability of services for them. We did not see that new services were being created and, as a result, suspect that in many places referrals may be to inappropriate or inadequate programs.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The implementation of JOBS, even in our small sample, is highly variable. Some of the JOBS programs we examined appear to really help teen parents by providing child care and transportation. There were some disturbing indications in other communities, however, that the FSA has done little or nothing to increase service options for teen parents. In these communities, the FSA merely imposes sanctions and sets up a system where enrolling in or remaining in school is unrewarded.

The uneven impact of FSA is particularly striking because the communities in which we interviewed were selected because of the existence of a teen parent program generally considered to be very good. Consequently, welfare officials in these communities had at least one fairly well-known program to which teen parents could be referred. JOBS funds could be used to increase the level of services available and the number of young mothers who could be served. But these programs did not always receive JOBS resources or JOBS referrals. In some communities in which exemplary teen parent programs were operating, this resource was not exploited at all by JOBS.

The likelihood that JOBS will use and support programs specifically designed to meet teen parent needs in communities with less exemplary or no teen parent program is clearly lower. In these communities, JOBS may well impose demands without providing benefits to its teen participants. In a survey of state implementation of JOBS, Figueroa (1990) found that JOBS money was being used to establish services where they were lacking, but that this service development focused on adult literacy and employment training. The special needs of teen parents were not targeted. Our data suggest that even when special programs are available, JOBS referrals are often made to regular school programs, which typically lack the supportive services that teen parents need. To meet the needs of teen parents, some service development targeted to teen mothers' needs and more use of existing special services are essential.

Finally, we need to examine the assumptions implicit in FSA that teen mothers should move quickly into JOBS, and that consequently, unique regulations pertaining to school-age mothers, e.g., mandatory participation without regard to baby's age, must exist. These implicit assumptions incorporate the idea popular in school-based programs that the period immediately following pregnancy is the golden or last opportunity to serve teen parents to prevent them from becoming mired in long-term poverty. This assumption argues for the provision of intensive services to teen mothers over a short period of time. The problem here, as elsewhere, is that the short period of services might be inadequate—especially when services are not well articulated, are not comprehensive, or are provided too briefly.

There is no explicit reason given in the FSA legislation for requiring teen parents to participate in JOBS regardless of the age of their children—a regulation not applied to adult participants. We can only surmise that first, teen parents are seen as a group in crisis requiring immediate remediation, and second, teen parents are seen as a problem that must be contained forcefully and immediately. If a teen is forced to participate in JOBS shortly after giving birth to her baby, and parenting education is provided along with supports for her new parenting role, the end result could be beneficial for the teen and her baby. The irony is that at least some JOBS programs refer teens to regular school programs that do not provide parenting education and that provide no ancillary supports.

Teen parent program staff argued in interviews in all phases of our study that intensive short-term programs are not enough—that teens must be provided the resources they need to develop skills and self-assurance over time—the same time often accorded to middle class youth who attend college or to the noncollege-bound who defer parenting. The FSA could be a positive force in supporting this approach by insisting that its teen funds be directed to settings in which support is currently available, and by reexamining how it defines a teen mother's "success."

6. FACILITATING ECONOMIC SELF-SUFFICIENCY FOR TEENAGE PARENTS: STRENGTHENING THE ROLE OF TEEN PARENT PROGRAMS

Our findings make clear that the provision of any vocational education in the context of special programs for teen parents requires difficult decisions and tradeoffs among a number of pressing needs. More difficult still is the provision of vocational education that pregnant and parenting teens are able and willing to use. Program enrollees may not take advantage of vocational education opportunities for a number of reasons, including lack of time, lack of child care flexibility, reluctance to leave the program site, and lack of a clear sense of its importance. Despite strong beliefs among program staff that teen mothers must become economically self-sufficient, they may not push vocational education for reasons of their own, including concerns about interfering in personal decisions and conveying negative messages to teen parents, beliefs in the primacy of parenting education, and sympathy for the many demands young mothers face.

Limited attention in most teen parent programs to these issues and the dilemmas that underlie them reduces the use and utility of vocational education. In the discussion that follows, we explore some of these issues and dilemmas and suggest ways to make vocational education more available and useful to teen mothers.

MEETING LONG-TERM NEEDS IN SHORT-TERM PROGRAMS: PARENTING, BASIC SKILLS, AND JOB-SKILLS TRAINING

The provision of vocational education in resource- and time-poor programs creates dilemmas for staff and enrollees. Although staff would like to provide enrollees with everything they need, providing everything may not be possible. Difficult choices must often be made about what to emphasize and what to ignore. One common choice perceived by staff pits parenting against vocational education. Given limited time and resources, and limited energy and attention on the part of teen mothers, many program staff to whom we spoke believed it unrealistic to try to focus on both. If forced to make this choice, respondents almost everywhere would—sometimes reluctantly—choose parenting. In the programs in which we interviewed, the parenting focus was evident, and in our sample, parenting education activities were featured in every program. Creating competent parents was almost universally found to be a major program goal.

The reasons for the focus on parenting are several. First, program staff are deeply concerned about the ability of young teens—many barely out of childhood themselves—to take care of a baby. They may have babysat younger siblings or other children, but, respondents believe, few are prepared for the enormous, multifaceted responsibilities associated with being the primary or sole caretaker of an infant. Many assert that the risks of child abuse in this population are very high.[1] They particularly worry about those mothers who plan to live alone after delivery.

---

[1] The empirical data on this point are inconclusive. Some studies report better parenting by older mothers (e.g., Kinard and Klerman, 1980), others find no age effects (e.g., Ragozin et al., 1982), and there is some evidence that the relationship, if it exists, may not be linear (e.g., Jones, Green, and Krauss, 1980).

Second, the focus on parenting contributes to the achievement of another common program goal—dropout prevention. Program staff often indicated that parenting material is regarded by enrollees as highly relevant to their lives. Numerous enrollees whom we interviewed remarked upon the usefulness of the parenting course and child care lab content, and pointedly contrasted the relevance of the parenting curriculum with the irrelevance of other school work.

In a number of programs, the parenting component was quite time-intensive, involving both formal coursework and time in the child care lab. This time commitment to parenting often foreclosed the possibility of other electives, including vocational education. Rarely had the implications of these requirements been discussed.

Nevertheless, the lack of time available for vocational education was rued by many program staff who believe that many teen mothers are recognizing for the first time that they might need to acquire job skills to support their child. A few staff members were concerned that the message that enrollees get from curricula heavily focused on parenting is that this is the *only* component of being a parent that matters. They believed that young mothers need to be taught that being a good parent includes performance in a wage-earning role as well.

Many programs reach an uneasy compromise between the need to impart both parenting and job-skills training by focusing on child development and parenting and providing work socialization material and guidance. Staff in these programs commonly express the hope that once the baby is born and parenting becomes more integrated into the mothers' lives, there would be more time and energy for job-skills training. In the time-limited programs, staff encourage enrollees to plan some involvement in vocational education when they return to regular school. However, few made any concrete efforts to facilitate the transition to such training. In those programs in which teen parents could remain until graduation, this approach often prevailed as well.

A second choice pits basic skill development against vocational education. Staff everywhere believed that integrating basic and job skills training would be ideal. Such integration would increase the likelihood of remaining in the program by providing usable training at the onset, and by reducing the total amount of time required to achieve job-skills proficiency. Recent evaluation data (e.g., Burghardt and Gordon, 1990) suggest that the integration of academic remediation and job-skills training results in more program enrollees working sooner and for higher wages. But such integration rarely occurs. More stringent vocational education eligibility requirements in most school districts have made this goal more difficult to achieve. JOBS programs that refer teen parents back to regular school programs do not contribute to this goal either. Even in community-based programs intent on integrating the two, these efforts have often stalled when teen mothers could not meet even minimal (e.g., 4th grade) literacy levels.

The attempt to address longer-term job-skills training and educational needs within the context of short-term programs is often problematic. Moreover, staff believe that many teen parents are not ready to act on all of their needs while enrolled in the program. For these reasons, it is important to think about addressing the needs of program enrollees over time. Helping enrollees to identify other service providers and to understand how to contact them is crucial to this effort. One way to do this is to formalize links between the teen parent program and other services. Articulation agreements, for example, smooth the often difficult transitions between service providers. Formal opportunities, such as a teen parent scholarship given annually by a local community college in one district we visited, serve to reinforce the message that teen parents are welcome and that support is available.

The programs that we visited are moving in the direction of thinking sequentially and in some cases actually providing sequential services. One program in our sample has formally committed itself to establishing support nets of services for teen parents leaving the program. The guidance efforts in all programs are another step in the right direction. One program, with a goal of work-ready graduates, was particularly strong in this area, incorporating guidance material into all course activities and providing a career counselor who ran intensive seminars on career options and training opportunities available in the community. Such clear links to future education and training reduce the costs and barriers to pursuing these activities.

These links should be personalized and behavioral. Personal plans that describe where further education or training will be sought and where child care can be obtained, which agencies can help to finance transport, child care, and tuition, and where and how a job can be sought following employment preparation are ways to facilitate progress. While enrolled in the program, teen parents should be encouraged to work on such plans by contacting agencies likely to be part of achieving personal goals, such as child care providers, counselors at post-secondary education and training sites, and agencies providing financial aid and other single-parent services. The development of longer-term employability plans (Bishop, 1988) would be one way to concretize this process.

In a number of the programs in our sample, students are permitted to remain in comprehensive programs for extended periods and in some cases through high school graduation. In these programs, the limited vocational education offerings that may be both understandable and tolerable in the short term severely limit career training options for long-term enrollees. Lack of explicit efforts to plan for training after leaving the program did nothing to mitigate this problem or its effects.

CHALLENGE OR ACCOMMODATION: RECONCILING TEEN MOTHERS' NEEDS AND LIMITS

The short-term nature of most of the programs that we visited has important implications for the delivery of services to program enrollees during their stay in the program and beyond. In school-based and school-sponsored teen parent programs, the prevailing crisis model obliges programs to provide enrollees virtually everything that they will need to function effectively as students, parents, and adults—all in the period immediately surrounding delivery.

Within the crisis model, vocational education holds an ambivalent place. On the one hand, job-skills training is clearly a part of "everything," and staff everywhere note its importance for teen parents, as discussed above. On the other hand, limited resources preclude the provision of "everything," and often vocational education is perceived as one thing that has to wait. Sometimes the wait must occur because there is no program time available, particularly when the program day is very short, or the parenting requirements are time-consuming and continuous. In other cases, staff believe that young mothers cannot handle the acquisition of additional adult role skills at this crisis point in their lives.

Vocational education, after all, deals with life after parenthood, something that many teen mothers have not begun to consider. The struggle to integrate parenting with adolescent and student roles, neither of which many teen mothers were handling particularly well before pregnancy, may tax them to their limits. Staff often believe that introducing job-skills training may push teen mothers too hard. This may be particularly true of the populations of teen parents who choose to come to comprehensive programs. At this time, when in most places teen pregnancy is far less stigmatized than ever before, the decision to leave one's peers and one's school to come to a special teen parent program says something about the young women who enroll there. Our interviews suggest that many come from very traditional homes, where work for women receives limited support. Most young women enrolled in comprehensive programs to whom we spoke indicated that they had come to the program to get away from peers and find some special support and protection. Staff believe that program enrollees are more frightened, less ambitious, and more likely to feel overwhelmed by their situation than teen mothers who stick it out in mainstream or regular school programs. For these young women in particular, being a teen mother may represent sufficient challenge. Adding vocational education to the mix could defeat them.

This view of vocational education as a source of potential overload contrasts sharply with one of the key functions vocational education is envisioned to serve for other high risk groups: a vital hook that keeps students interested in school when success in academic pursuits is elusive and school seems otherwise irrelevant (e.g., Oakes, 1986b). For teen mothers, parenting coursework and the emotional support provided by teen parent programs appear to serve the functions accorded to vocational education for nonparenting students.[2] Learning about the coming of a new baby in parenting classes is interesting, engaging, and highly relevant to their lives. Since teen parents have, at least at a behavioral level, accepted the parenting role when they decided to carry their pregnancy to term and keep their infant, parenting education is seen as a means to facilitate performance in that role. Far fewer are clear about their role as worker; for those who do accept that role, it often seems remote.

The issue of overload is a particularly important one for younger teen mothers. Staff everywhere agree that the idea of job-skills training or even work socialization for 13- or 14-year-olds does not make sense. It is not something they would be getting had they not become parents; being in a situation where it is expected of them is counter-productive. This is particularly true when the available vocational education opportunities are provided by a voc-tech center, staff argue. Often, the vocational programs there require the passage of proficiency tests and junior or senior standing; this excludes the youngest mothers.

Two programs we visited accept middle school-aged mothers.[3] In one, these mothers are separated from older enrollees and spend their time in a single classroom doing middle school coursework exclusively. In the other, the youngest mothers enroll in a basic skills/remedial education program usually used by voc-tech students as a means of preparing for proficiency exams.

Numerous respondents noted that programming for the youngest teen mothers must take into account their difficult histories. Several program staff members volunteered that very young teen mothers are frequently victims of sexual abuse or other family dysfunction and thus cannot handle too many pressures. Moreover, the long period and many credits that they will need to complete high school, combined with their emotional immaturity, create their own pressures. Research repeatedly confirms that the likelihood of school completion is inversely related to the age at first birth (e.g., Upchurch and McCarthy, 1989; Mott and Marsiglio, 1985).

---

[2] Indeed, some have expressed concern that teen parent programs offer too much support and are thus too appealing. To meet these objections, some programs have established policies that do not permit mothers with second pregnancies to enroll.

[3] The remaining nine programs in our fieldwork sample do not accept these youngest mothers. In most instances, staff reasons for not serving this group include the inappropriateness of the curriculum for mothers this age, the lack of middle school certification on the part of staff, and the lack of resources to establish a separate program for them.

These concerns about teen parent overload, combined with limited program resources, often result in vocational education being given "lip service"—important in principle but unstressed in the program. The lack of unambiguous staff support for vocational education no doubt contributes to our finding that even when varied vocational education opportunities exist, few teen parents take advantage of them.

OPTIMIZING JOB-SKILLS ACQUISITION IN A CHANGING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION CONTEXT

In recent years, vocational education activists have increasingly advocated a model that inculcates generic skills at the secondary level and reserves advanced job-skills training to post-secondary institutions. A major factor in this movement is the enormous cost involved in equipping up-to-date, high-technology job-skills training facilities. Secondary schools lack such funds. Consequently, the job-skills training provided at the secondary level has become increasingly outmoded and of limited use to students and employers.

At the same time, secondary programs have also become more rigorous, in response to the more general push toward academic reform. Research evidence indicating that sequenced vocational education programs are more effective in inculcating usable job skills than individual courses (e.g., Stern et al., 1985) has also fostered a more rigorous approach to vocational education programming in secondary schools. Increasingly, these more rigorous programs require proficiency testing for admission and insist that program enrollees adhere to strict attendance requirements.

The push toward more rigorous and sequenced vocational education may make it less appealing to teen parents, who lack basic skills and are often overwhelmed by parenting and school responsibilities. The likelihood that they will remain in longer-term programs appears poor, given high dropout rates among teen mothers (e.g., McGee, 1988a, Mauldon and Morrison, 1989), although recent evidence suggests that some of the apparent dropout among teen mothers may be a temporary phenomenon (e.g., Mauldon and Morrison, 1989).

Yet the notion of sequencing may in fact be quite compatible with the ways that teen parent programs currently handle vocational education. Many teen parent programs currently sequence vocational education, often by limiting their vocational education focus to work socialization, career exploration, and guidance around these issues. This limited vocational education focus flows from a usually implicit decision to address other needs, mainly parenting and basic skills training, and to avoid the difficulties inherent in attempting to provide meaningful vocational education within the context of a short-term program.

Rarely, however, have programs that have chosen this path recognized and built in the supports necessary to ensure that teen parents pursue vocational or other post-secondary education beyond their time in the program. There are few, if any, efforts made to help young mothers apply the career-related information that they have acquired in the program to scheduling choices at comprehensive high schools or voc-tech schools when they leave the program, and there are even fewer attempts to help them make a transition to post-secondary education or community-based training opportunities.

RETHINKING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION FOR TEEN MOTHERS

New trends in vocational education and the difficulties in providing vocational education to teen mothers in the context of school-based programs suggest that some rethinking of this issue by program planners and vocational educators is in order. A first effort might well involve a careful examination of the temporal assumptions implicit in the vocational education opportunities provided, and how they mesh with the program model. If the program is short-term, for example, and enrollees are never permitted to stay past a semester or two, vocational education might well focus on work socialization, expansion of career awareness, and reinforcement of the message in the parenting curriculum that a good mother is a mother who provides financially for her child. Critical to such an approach would be active longer-term planning.

However, if the program is long-term either by design or in fact, that is, many students remain for long periods in a "short-term" program, vocational education may need to be different. In this situation, it would be important to look at the graduation rate, and the rate at which teen mothers graduating from the program enroll in post-secondary programs. Sadly, few programs are equipped to make these assessments, lacking as they do long-term data on enrollees' outcomes. Such information would obviously help program planners to determine whether crisis model assumptions, e.g., that many enrollees drop out of school or do not go on to post-secondary education (immediately or later), held in their population. If they did, it would support the need for job-skills training in the program. However, if teen parents completed school and pursued post-secondary education in large numbers, it might be that job awareness, intensive counseling and planning around the transition to secondary or post-secondary education, and the development of articulation agreements would enable many enrollees to acquire such training after program completion. Such scrutiny would be particularly important with regard to the youngest teen mothers, as discussed above.

It would be critical as well to examine patterns of vocational education use by program enrollees. We learned during our fieldwork that a full menu of vocational education opportunities often does not translate into a high level of use, even when free bus service and coordination with the child care center's operating hours are available. In several programs providing off-site vocational education services and transportation, no one was currently enrolled off-site, and no one had gone for years. Instead, enrollees took the very limited, isolated vocational education courses available within the program. For all intents and purposes, these off-site opportunities did not exist. Enrollments in courses provided in collocated programs were somewhat higher, but use rates remained fairly low.

In such programs, it would be important to rethink the purpose and priority of vocational education and to examine the nature of the barriers that exist to vocational education enrollment. It may be that enrollees are getting a message that other foci are more appropriate and necessary. It may be that the costs of leaving the program are too high. Or teen parents may be made to feel unwelcome. Teen parent program staff would do well to examine whether their own reluctance to "interfere" in important decisions that enrollees make may be perceived by them as a lack of support for these choices. It may be that interested enrollees simply need a bit of a push for them to make the commitment to leave the program during the day. And if no one goes, it also might be necessary to think about what, if any, additions to the vocational education curriculum the program should offer on-site.

Providing usable and useful vocational education for teen mothers enrolled in special programs is a goal beset by logistical, psychological, and educational problems. It is not, however, an impossible one. Numerous young mothers to whom we spoke were currently engaged in vocational education or job-skills training in or through the teen parent program. Many had both well-defined post-secondary goals and well-defined plans to reach them. These young women benefited from a combination of active family and staff support for these choices, schedules that permitted the pursuit of vocational education, and a variety of options from which to choose. In each case, child care was adequate to accommodate vocational education programs.

The individual successes we observed suggest ways to improve vocational education access and outcomes for all teen mothers. Key to increasing use of vocational education opportunities are adequate child care, making vocational education a program priority, and active staff support for it.

CHILD CARE

The availability of child care is critical to successful involvement in any education or training activities. Funds for child care are often limited, resulting in waiting lists and constrained hours that may preclude enrollments in specialized training programs. The potential of the FSA to increase the supply of child care had not yet been realized in the programs in our sample; use of FSA funds for this purpose would enable more teen parents to pursue education and training.

As noted repeatedly by respondents, the location of child care in most instances dictates the school program in which a teen mother will enroll. Certainly, the location of the major or only child care center serving teen parents deserves an examination in the context of any attempt to expand or realize vocational education opportunities. When the center is located at the site of the teen parent program, a location that makes sense on a number of grounds, it may reduce the inclination of teen mothers to involve themselves in off-site vocational education opportunities.

Such limitations are, of course, inherent in locating the child care center in *any* particular site. For this reason, some consideration of alternative ways to deliver child care services, e.g., family day care satellites closely connected to the teen parent program, might be in order. Decentralized child care would allow teen parents to more freely choose among school programs and would in many cases substantially reduce the costs of remaining in school.[4]

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AS A PROGRAM PRIORITY

Vocational education is rarely a major program component despite widespread staff concern about economic self-sufficiency. Many programs choose to focus on what they see as teen mothers' most pressing needs—self-esteem, basic skills, and parenting. Our data suggest that when vocational education and job-skills training become a formal program priority either because outside funders require it or because program staff support it—use of vocational education and job skills or training opportunities increases dramatically. Although in the former programs such use is certainly encouraged by the realization that the program will be assessed in part by level of use, in the latter programs increased use appeared to flow from simply making vocational education a consensual program goal. The effects of such goals on staff and enrollee behavior can be powerful. In a program where job training was an important program goal and post-secondary education was stressed as the best means of imparting work skills, virtually all enrollees both completed high school and enrolled in post-secondary training.

---

[4] The authors are indebted to Fern Marx for her insights concerning this issue.

But even when staff decide that program time must focus elsewhere, vocational education can be successfully promoted. Work socialization and career awareness activities combined with limited shadowing programs may be adequate in short-term programs, if they are paired with active, personalized vocational planning. Articulation agreements, individual employability plans, and explicit, active support for vocational planning may be far more important in the long run in helping teen mothers achieve economic independence than short-term job-skills training. Making the links between limited, program-based vocational education and vocational resources outside the program will convey its importance to teen mothers and facilitate their achievement of their own career goals.

STAFF SUPPORT

Key to any reassessment of vocational education in the context of programs for pregnant and parenting teens is the adequacy and intensity of staff support and guidance. Although teen parent programs pride themselves on the provision of emotional support and self-esteem building, we found that more practical and longer-range support for career planning was often lacking. Rethinking the common hands-off policy with regard to directing students toward vocational education and nontraditional occupations would be a critical first step.

Part of a more active staff commitment to vocational education would involve greater recognition of barriers to vocational education that teen mothers face. A key one is the need to mix with nonparenting students in off-site or co-site vocational education. Many teen mothers are attracted to special programs because they provide support and isolation not available elsewhere. Such young mothers are understandably reluctant to leave the program to take vocational education. In these cases, staff awareness and support might help some young mothers to overcome their resistance, or it might result in the design of a long-term plan for vocational training.

If realistic training options are not available, transportation links are lacking, or vocational education is not appropriate during program enrollment for a teen mother, program staff can encourage later vocational training by using the period of program enrollment to actively promote employment preparation and the exploration of careers. The program could provide aptitude testing and work socialization designed to convince teen mothers of their ability to prepare for and succeed at well-paying jobs.

Staff should also monitor the message that the program sends about vocational education. Verbal support without behavioral backup may leave teen mothers believing that staff think career preparation is of minor importance. Schedules that focus heavily on parenting skills and that include no career planning may convey to enrollees that parenting, and not paid work, is what really matters.

SUMMARY

The provision of vocational education in the context of programs for pregnant and parenting students poses many practical problems as well as some fundamental dilemmas. Program planners' efforts to provide vocational education opportunities that are truly accessible are often stymied by program structure and the reluctance of program enrollees to assume the costs involved in traveling off-site and mixing with their nonparenting peers. The provision of accessible vocational education is also stymied by widespread failure to examine the assumptions that underlie the mix and intensity of services that teen parent programs provide or to consider the ways in which vocational education fits into broader program goals and activities and temporally into young mothers' lives.

Teen parent programs have taken on a great deal—a reflection of the many pressing needs that teen mothers bring to them. Whether or not these programs can or even should attempt to provide vocational education and if so, what kinds, remains an open question. Much depends on program goals, school district, community and program resources, and the service model to which the program ascribes. But regardless of what vocational education is provided by the program, stronger emphasis on the need for job-skills training at some point, combined with concrete, personalized career planning, would greatly benefit program enrollees and send them an important, if more complex, message about the joys and responsibilities of parenting.

Appendix
THE FAMILY SUPPORT ACT

The Family Support Act of 1988 (FSA), P.L. 100-485, contained much-heralded changes in the employment and training requirements for Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) recipients, and in the types of support services for which states could receive federal financial participation. The FSA is the latest in a series of amendments to the AFDC program designed to replace welfare benefits with employment.[1]

PROVISIONS OF THE FAMILY SUPPORT ACT

The FSA requires that each state set up a Job Opportunities and Basic Skills (JOBS) program by October 1, 1990, and have it available throughout the state by October 1, 1992. Mandatory participants are required to enroll in JOBS as a condition of retaining their welfare grants.[2] Failure to participate without "good cause" results in the loss of the individual's share of the welfare grant.[3] The state must include a variety of work and training programs in its JOBS program, but the extent to which any particular component is available is left to state discretion. The issues of who must participate and the services that are to be provided are discussed below.

Mandatory and Voluntary Participants

The general rule is that all AFDC recipients who are 16–59 years of age and are not disabled or already working 30 or more hours per week must participate in the JOBS program.[4] There is an exemption for individuals who are more than three months pregnant.

A number of provisions treat teen parents differently from older parents. Parents age 20 or older are required to participate in JOBS if they have a child over the age of three (or over the age of one at the state's option). In contrast, the FSA requires all teen parents aged 16–19 who receive AFDC benefits and who do not have a high school degree to participate in education and training activities, *regardless of the age of the teen parent's child*, as long as state resources permit. A teen parent who is in school full time is exempt from the requirements, as is a teen parent who is ill or incapacitated, or who is needed at home because her child is ill or incapacitated. Parents who are age 20 or older and are personally providing care to a child under six cannot be required to participate more than 20 hours per week. In contrast, parents who are age 16–19 may be required to attend school full time (as defined by the educational provider).

---

[1] The prior programs included the Community Work Experience Program and the Work Incentives Program. These programs, and the history leading up to the FSA, are described in Handler (1987).

[2] AFDC grant levels vary from state to state, although no state has a benefit level that meets the federal poverty guidelines. In 1987, benefits ranged from 13 percent to 79 percent of the federal poverty guidelines (Axinn and Stern, 1987). As of 1987, 35 states paid less than 50 percent of the federal poverty line (VandeVeer, 1987).

[3] The sanction for failure to participate in the JOBS program is loss of that individual's share of the grant. Assume (using Pennsylvania's grant levels) a parent receives benefits for herself and for one child. A grant for two persons is $316/month. If the parent is sanctioned, the grant is reduced to $205/month, the amount of the grant for the child only. Similarly, if there were three persons on the grant and one were sanctioned, the grant would be reduced from $403 to $316/month.

[4] There are complicated rules for exemptions and for "good cause" failure to participate in JOBS activities in certain situations.

Under the FSA, states are required to give priority to four target groups:

- Parents under age 24 who have not completed high school and are not enrolled in high school or its equivalent;
- Recipients who have gotten AFDC for at least 36 months during the last 60 months;
- Parents under age 24 with little or no recent work history;
- Members of a family in which the youngest child is within two years of becoming ineligible for AFDC because of age (16 or 17, depending on whether the state ends AFDC eligibility at 18 or 19).

Most AFDC teen parents will be members of at least one of these target groups. Within a target group, states must give priority to volunteers, who are then entitled to supportive services.

Participation Rates

States must meet federal "participation rates" or their federal reimbursement will be reduced. These participation rates are set at 7 percent in fiscal year 1990 and gradually increase to 20 percent by fiscal year 1995. In calculating the rate, the denominator is the number of AFDC recipients in the state who are not exempt from JOBS participation; the numerator is the number who are actually participating. In calculating the numerator, only those individuals who attend at least 75 percent of their scheduled hours (with no "good cause" exception for missed hours) may be counted. Therefore, states have an incentive to deny "good cause" exemptions for missed hours. Welfare officials estimate that they must enroll 40 percent to 50 percent of AFDC recipients in JOBS to get 7 percent that will meet the participation requirements (Kosterlitz, 1989). As states increase enrollments in JOBS, costs are expected to rise disproportionately as more needy and less-willing clients will be requiring services. Education, training, support, and monitoring costs will escalate, yet federal funding for JOBS is capped.

Employment and Training Components

Each state is required to include certain components in their JOBS program: high school education or high school equivalency education; basic literacy education; education in English as a second language; job-skills training; job-readiness activities; and job-development and job-placement activities. In addition, each state must have at least two of the following: job search (with clients required to bring in weekly proof of a specified number of job-seeking contacts with businesses); on-the-job training; work supplementation (subsidized jobs in which the state pays all or part of the wages); and community work experience (work relief in which clients are required to work off their grants, dividing the amount of the grant by the minimum wage and requiring that number of unpaid hours of work for a public or nonprofit agency). The state may also offer vocational or technical school, or college.

There are vastly different costs involved in implementing each component and in the numbers of recipients assigned to each one. There is no requirement that any particular component be available to all JOBS participants or to any specific percentage of JOBS participants. A state has enormous leeway in determining the availability (and therefore the cost) of any JOBS component.

Under the FSA requirements, most 16- and 17-year-olds must be assigned to educational activities (high school or its equivalent).

Supportive Services

States are required to "guarantee" child care and transportation for any participant in JOBS who is making "satisfactory progress," whether their participation is voluntary or mandatory.[5] Although the state is "not required to provide child care directly or to otherwise create child care services," it cannot require an individual to participate in JOBS if necessary child care is not available.[6] This child care requirement has the potential to vastly increase the availability of child care resources for teen parents. But such expansion is not guaranteed by the FSA, as states can simply exempt teen parents by declaring that child care is unavailable. The state has a wide variety of choices about how to provide child care under the FSA. It can make payments directly to providers or to the AFDC recipient (either in advance or as reimbursement), provide the care directly, arrange for free care through volunteer community groups or other agencies, or make any other arrangements it deems appropriate. The state must allow parents to choose among available types of child care (center, family child care, or in-home), and must have at least one method of payment for self-arranged child care. The FSA is clear in its intent to make available child care accessible and appropriate. It specifies that the state must

> take into account the individual needs of the child, including the reasonable accessibility of the care to the child's home and school, or caretaker's place of employment or training (based on normally accepted standards in the community or state), and the appropriateness of the care to the age and special needs of the child.[7]

The federal Department of Health and Human Services expressly rejected proposals that would have required states to provide on-site day care for the children of teen parents, choosing instead to allow states, and presumably parents, more discretion in the delivery and use of child care services.[8]

---

[5] Although the statute provides that child care must be guaranteed to persons "satisfactorily participating" in a JOBS activity, and that transportation and other supportive services must be provided to "any individual participating in the program," the preamble to the federal regulations requires that an individual be making "satisfactory progress," to be eligible for child care, transportation, and other supportive services. The regulations define "satisfactory progress" in an educational program as dependent upon the educational institution's written policies and includes "both a qualitative measure . . . such as a grade point average, and a quantitative measure . . . such as a reasonable time limit by which a student is expected to complete her studies" (45 C.F.R. 250.1). This imposition of a more stringent requirement in the regulations than in the statute may result in litigation on behalf of participants who are denied supportive services on the basis of unsatisfactory progress.

Under the regulations, if a state reduces or terminates child care, the recipient has the right to appeal the termination but is not entitled to continuing child care while her appeal is pending. An individual who is denied necessary child care has "good cause" for failure to participate in the program.

[6] *Fed. Reg.* 42217 (October 13, 1989).

[7] 54 Fed. Reg. 42189 (October 13, 1989).

[8] Although on-site child care centers are generally the only child care option available to teen mothers in school-based teen parent programs, some have argued that such care is not optimal for infants. Group care is associated with increased morbidity (Johansen, Leibowitz, and Waite, 1988) and the need to transport infants considerable distances may also reduce attendance (Marx, 1989).

States must respond to a request for child care "within a reasonable period of time," but no particular time frame is specified. There is no required time frame for responding to a request to enter JOBS or to perform an assessment to determine a JOBS assignment. This may cause a problem for teens who need to arrange child care in advance of the school year. Additionally, states may choose to pay for child care for up to two weeks while awaiting the beginning of a JOBS component or for up to a month where child care arrangements would otherwise be lost and the subsequent activity is scheduled to begin within that period. Although potentially helpful in minimizing disruptions in care, this option may not be sufficient for teens who need to retain a day care slot during the summer to have child care available when school resumes in September.

States may choose to pay actual costs for child care up to a statewide limit but not in excess of local market rates. The local market rate is defined to allow payment up to the 75th percentile cost of care in the local area.

Coordination with Other Agencies

States are required under the FSA to coordinate their child care activities with existing child care resource and referral agencies, and with early childhood education programs in the state, including Head Start programs and other school and community-based programs. States are also required to coordinate other supportive services with related services provided by other agencies.

States are also required to consult and coordinate their JOBS activities with the state agencies responsible for the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA), with the state employment service, with adult education/vocational education, and with child care and public housing. The state and local welfare agencies must also consult with the Private Industry Councils (PICs) established under JTPA concerning the types of jobs available, or likely to become available, in the area, and on the development of arrangements and contracts for JOBS programs.

STATE DISCRETION IN OPTIONS AFFECTING TEEN PARENTS

States have tremendous leeway in implementing the FSA. The state can emphasize voluntary participation or can maximize sanctions. States can choose to emphasize voluntary participation by making the program attractive to participants, by conducting outreach to encourage participation, and by focusing on services and opportunities. In contrast, states can choose to maximize sanctions by emphasizing the punitive aspects of the program, relying on sanctions to coerce participation (or reduce expenses by decreasing the numbers of welfare recipients), rather than making the program attractive enough so that recipients will want to participate. These latter states are likely to focus their programs around less-expensive components, such as job search, rather than on more expensive skills training. The state can offer large numbers of educational slots, ranging from basic literacy to college programs, or can simply refer large numbers of participants to GED programs and "job search." Greenberg (1988) lists ten key choices:

1. Exempting adult parents with very young children.
2. Choosing the number of participants: serving fewer with better support or mandating more participants and giving each one less.
3. Including participant categories other than those prescribed by federal law.

4. Maximizing opportunities for volunteers, i.e., among the categories of mandatory participants, the state can either choose to serve only volunteers or can require that all recipients in those categories participate.
5. Maximizing opportunities for basic and remedial education.
6. Rationing the more expensive components, e.g., private vocational education.
7. Building in safeguards to minimize sanctions.
8. Supplementing the incomes of participants taking low-paying entry-level positions if these could have payoffs in the future.
9. Providing child care at the market rate: alternatively, states can exert significant pressure on recipients to arrange informal child care and transportation, thereby avoiding the cost of providing these services.
10. Providing two-parent grants on a time-limited basis or for as long as needed.

REFERENCES

Adams, G., "The Dynamics of Welfare Recipiency Among Adolescent Mothers," cited in B. Miller and K. Moore, *Journal of Marriage and the Family 52*, 1990, pp. 1025–1044.

Adler, E., M. Bates, and J. Merdinger, "Educational Policies and Programs for Teenage Parents and Pregnant Teenagers," *Family Relations 34*, 1985, pp. 183–187.

Axinn, J., and M. Stern, "Women and the Postindustrial Welfare State," *Social Work 32*, 1987, pp. 282–285.

Bachrach, C., "Adoption Plans, Adopted Children, and Adoptive Mothers," *Journal of Marriage and the Family 48*, 1986, pp. 243–253.

Baldwin, W., "Adolescent Pregnancy and Childbearing—Growing Concerns for Americans," *Population Bulletin*, September 1977.

Baldwin, W., "Adolescent Pregnancy and Childbearing—An Overview," *Seminars in Perinatology 5(1)*, January 1981, pp. 1–8.

Baldwin, W., and V. Cain, "The Children of Teenage Parents," *Family Planning Perspectives 12(1)*, 1980, pp. 4–43.

Bates, John E., C. Maslin, and K. Frankel, "Attachment Security, Mother-Child Interaction, and Temperament as Predictors of Behavior Problem Rating at Age Three Years," in I. Bretherton and E. Walters (eds.), *Growing Points of Attachment Theory and Research: Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development 50*, 1985, pp. 167–193.

Benn, Rita, and E. Saltz, *The Effects of Grandmother Support on Teen Parenting and Infant Attachment Patterns Within the Family*, paper presented at the meeting of the Society for research in Child Development, Kansas City, Missouri, 1989.

Bishop, J., "Vocational Education for At-Risk Youth: How Can It Be Made More Effective?" in *School to Work Transition Services for Disadvantaged Youth*, Center for Advanced Human Resource Studies, Ithaca, NY, 1988.

Block, F., R. A. Cloward, B. Ehrenreich, and F. F. Piven, *The Mean Season*, Pantheon Books, New York, 1987.

Brindis, C., and R. Jeremy, "Adolescent Pregnancy and Parenting in California: A Strategic Plan for Action," University of California, Institute for Health Policy Studies, San Francisco, California, 1988.

Burghardt, J., and A. Gordon, *More Jobs and Higher Pay: How an Integrated Program Compares with Traditional Programs*, Rockefeller Foundation, New York, 1990.

Carey, William, and S. McDevitt, "Revision of the Infant Temperament Questionnaire," *Pediatrics 61*, 1978, pp. 735–739.

Center for Population Options, *Teenage Pregnancy and Too Early Childbearing: Public Costs*, 5th edition, Center for Population Options, Washington, D.C., 1990.

Center on Social Welfare Policy and Law, "Memorandum to Welfare Specialists Re: AFDC: Update on Status of State Plans for Implementation of JOBS," The Welfare Law Center, Washington, D.C., August 17, 1989.

Chess, Stella, and A. Thomas, *Origins and Evolutions of Behavior Disorders: From Infancy to Early Adult Life,* Brunner-Mazel, New York, 1984.

Children's Defense Fund, *Adolescent Pregnancy: An Anatomy of a Social Problem in Search of Comprehensive Solutions,* Children's Defense Fund Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Clearinghouse, Washington, D.C., January 1987.

Coll, Cynthia, J. Hoffman, and W. Oh, "The Social Ecology and Early Parenting of Caucasian Adolescent Mothers," *Child Development 58,* 1987, pp. 955–963.

Congressional Research Service, *Dropping Out: The Educational Vulnerability of At-Risk Youths,* Report #88-417-EPW, Library of Congress, May 24, 1988.

Cote, C., *Reading, Writing, and Raising Kids,* Statewide Youth Advocacy, Rochester, New York, 1990.

Couch, A. S., G. Felstehausen, L. Glosson, and J. C. Fuller, "Challenges of Work/Family Research," *Journal of Vocational Home Economics Education 6(1),* 1988, pp. 78–86.

Culp, Rex, A. Culp, J. D. Osofsky, and H. J. Osofsky, *Adolescent and Older Mothers: Comparison of Their Interaction with Their Six-Month-Old Infants,* paper presented at the meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development, Kansas City, Missouri, 1989.

Ellwood, D., *Targeting "Would Be" Long-Term Recipients of AFDC,* Mathematic Policy Research, Princeton, New Jersey, 1986.

Feldstein, R., and D. Ellwood, "Teenage Unemployment: What Is the Problem?" in R. Freeman and D. Wise (eds.), *The Youth Labor Market Problem: Its Nature, Causes, and Consequences,* University of Chicago Press, Chicago, Illinois, 1982.

Field, T. M., S. Widmayer, S. Stringer, and E. Ignatoff, "Teenage, Lower-Class, Black Mothers and their Preterm Infants: An Intervention and Development Followup," *Child Development 51,* 1980, pp. 426–436.

Figueroa, J., *Meeting JOBS' Educational Services Requirements: State Developments,* National Governors' Association, Washington, D.C., 1990.

Foehrenbach, J., "Preparing for Learnfare: Setting the Conditions for a Questionable Experiment," *Clearinghouse Review* 22, 22, 1989, p. 1060.

Franz, N., et al., *A Report on High School Graduation Requirements and Enrollment Patterns in High School Vocational Education Programs in the U.S.,* Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, Virginia, 1987.

Furstenberg, F., J. Brooks-Gunn, and S. Morgan, *Adolescent Mothers in Later Life,* Cambridge University Press, New York, 1987.

General Accounting Office (GAO), briefing report to the Honorable John H. Chafee, United States Senate: *Teenage Pregnancy: 500,000 Births a Year but Few Tested Programs,* July 1986.

Greenberg, M., *Family Support Act of 1988: JOBS Program and Related Amendments, Requirements, Issues and Options*, Center for Law and Social Policy, Washington, D.C., 1988.

Greenberg, M., and J. Levin-Epstein, *The JOBS Program: Good Ideas and Some Concerns in the First Round of State Plans*, Center for Law and Social Policy, Washington, D.C., August 1989.

Greene, J. W., H. Sandler, W. Altmeier, and S. O'Connor, "Child Rearing Attitudes, Observed Behavior, and Perception of Infant Temperament in Adolescent Versus Older Mothers," *Pediatric Research 15*, 1981, p. 442.

Guthrie, J., et al., *Conditions of Education in California, 1986–87*, PACE, Berkeley, California, 1987.

Haggstrom, G. W., T. J. Blaschke, D. E. Kanouse, W. J. Lisowski, and P. A. Morrison, *Teenage Parents: Their Ambitions and Attainments*, RAND, R-2771-NICHD, July 1981.

Handler, J. F., "The Transformation of Aid to Families with Dependent Children: The Family Support Act in Historical Context," *Review of Law and Social Change 16*, 1987, p. 457.

Hayes, C. D. (ed.), *Risking the Future: Adolescent Sexuality, Pregnancy, and Childbearing*, National Academy Press, Washington, D.C., 1987.

Hofferth, S., "Social and Economic Consequences of Teenage Childbearing," in S. Hofferth and C. Hayes (eds.), *Risking the Future: Adolescent Sexuality, Pregnancy and Childbearing*, Vol. 1, National Academy Press, Washington, D.C., 1987, pp. 123–144.

Hughes, D., et al. (eds.), *The Health of America's Children: Maternal and Child Health Data Book*, Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention, Children's Defense Fund, 1988.

Johansen, A., A. Leibowitz, and L. Waite, "Child Care and Children's Illness," *American Journal of Public Health 78(9)*, September 1988, pp. 1175–1177.

Jones, F. A., V. Green, and D. Krauss, "Maternal Responsiveness of Primiparous Mothers During the Postpartum Period: Age Differences," *Pediatrics 65*, 1980, pp. 579–586.

Kellam, S. G., R. G. Adams, C. H. Brown, and M. E. Ensminger, "The Long-Term Evolution of the Family Structure of Teenage and Older Mothers," *Journal of Marriage and the Family 44(3)*, August 1982.

Kinard, E., and L. Klerman, "Teenage Parenting and Child Abuse," *American Journal of Orthopsychology 50(3)*, 1980, pp. 481–488.

Kosterlitz, J., "Devil in the Details," *National Journal 21(48)*, December 2, 1989, pp. 2942–2946.

"Learnfare," *Family Matters 1(2)*, Center for Law and Social Policy, Washington, D.C., Winter 1989, pp. 1, 6–8.

Lotto, L. S., "The Holding Power of Vocational Curricula: Characteristics of Effective Dropout Prevention Programs," *Journal of Vocational Education Research 7(40)*, Fall 1982, pp. 39–48.

Luster, Tom, and K. Rhoades, "The Relation Between Child-Rearing Beliefs and the Home Environment in a Sample of Adolescent Mothers," *Family Relations 38*, 1989, pp. 317–322.

Marx, F., Personal communication, November 27, 1989.

Mauldon, J., and Morrison, P., "Leaving School Early: 'Stopping Out' and Dropping Out Among American Youth," paper presented at meetings of the American Sociological Association, San Francisco, California, August 1989.

Maxfield, M., and M. Rucci, "A Simulation Model of Employment and Training Programs for Long-Term Welfare Recipients: Technical Documentation," Mathematical Policy Research, Inc., Washington, D.C., 1986.

McDonnell, L., and W. N. Grubb, *Education and Training for Work: The Policy Instruments and the Institutions*, RAND, R-4026-NCRVE, 1991.

McGee, E., *Improving Education Opportunities for Pregnant and Parenting Students*, Academy for Educational Development, September 1988a.

McGee, E., "A Challenge for State Policymakers," *PDACA NEWS*, 1988b.

McLaughlin, S., D. Manninen, and L. Winges, "Do Adolescents Who Relinquish Their Children Fare Better or Worse Than Those Who Raise Them?" *Family Planning Perspectives 20(1)*, January/February 1988.

Mertens, D. M., *Vocational Education and the High School Dropout*, National Center for Research in Vocational Education, Ohio State University, Columbus, 1982.

Meyer, R. H., *An Economic Analysis of High School Vocational Education: IV. The Labor Market Effects of Vocational Education*, The Urban Institute, Washington, D.C., 1981.

Miller, B., and K. Moore, "Adolescent Sexual Behavior, Pregnancy and Parenting: Research Through the 1980s," *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 52, 1990, pp. 1025–1044.

Miller, D., *Women and Social Welfare*, Praeger, New York, 1990.

Moore, K., *Facts at a Glance*, Child Trends, Inc., Washington, D.C., 1988.

Moore, K., and M. Burt, *Private Crisis, Public Cost: Policy Perspective on Teenage Childbearing*, The Urban Institute, Washington, D.C., 1982.

Moore, K., and S. Caldwell, "The Effect of Government Policies on Out-of-Wedlock Sex and Pregnancy," in F. Fustenberg, L. Liveston, and J. Menken (eds.), *Teenage Sexuality, Pregnancy and Child Bearing*, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 1981.

Mott, F., and W. Marsiglio, "Early Childbearing and Completion of High School," *Family Planning Perspectives 17*, 1985, p. 234.

Murphy, J., *Getting the Facts: A Fieldwork Guide for Evaluators and Policy Analysts*, Goodyear, Santa Monica, California, 1980.

Murray, C., *According to Age: Longitudinal Profiles of AFDC Recipients and the Poor by Age Group*, American Enterprise Institute, Washington, D.C., 1986.

Nathanson, C., and M. Becker, "Contraceptive Behavior Among Unmarried Young Women: A Theoretical Framework for Research," *Population and Environment 6*, 1983, pp. 39–59.

Nathanson, C., and M. Becker, "The Influence of Client-Provider Relations on Teenage Womens' Subsequent Use of Contraception," *American Journal of Public Health 75*, 1985, pp. 33–38.

National Assessment of Vocational Education (NAVE), *First Interim Report*, January 1988.

National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), Advance Report of Final Natality Statistics, 1988, *Monthly Vital Statistics Report 28 (11)*, April 28, 1980.

National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), Advance Report of Final Natality Statistics, 1988, *Monthly Vital Statistics Report* 39, August 15, 1990.

National Commission on Children, *Enhancing School Readiness: Support for Early Childhood Development*, National Commission on Children, Washington, D.C., 1989.

Oakes, J., "Limiting Opportunity: Student Race and Curricular Differences in Secondary Vocational Education," *American Journal of Education 91(3)*, May 1983.

Oakes, J., "Beneath the Bottom Line: A Critique of Vocational Education Research," *Journal of Vocational Education Research* 22(2), Spring 1986a.

Oakes, J., "Beyond Tinkering: Reconstructing Vocational Education," in G. Copa, J. Plihal, and M. Johnson (eds.), *Re-Visioning Vocational Education in the Secondary School*, University of Minnesota, St. Paul, 1986b.

O'Connell, M., and C. Rogers, "Out-of-Wedlock Births, Premarital Pregnancies and Their Effect on Family Formation and Dissolution," *Family Planning Perspectives 16*, 1984, p. 157.

Polit, D. F., *Building Self-Sufficiency: A Guide to Vocational and Employment Services for Teenage Parents*, Humanalysis, Jefferson City, Missouri, 1986.

Ragozin, A. S., R. Basham, K. Crnic, N. Greenberg, and N. Robinson, "Effects of Maternal Age on Parenting Role," *Developmental Psychology 18*, 1982, pp. 627–634.

Resnick, L. B., "Learning in School and Out," *Educational Researcher*, December 1987.

Roosa, M., "Adolescent Mothers, School Drop-Outs and School-Based Intervention Programs," *Family Relations 35*, 1986, pp. 313–317.

Sanger, M. B., "The Inherent Contradiction of Welfare Reform," *Policy Studies Journal 18*, 1990, pp. 663–680.

Simms, M. C., and M. L. Leitch, *Determinants of Youth Participation in Employment and Training Programs with a Special Focus on Young Women*, The Urban Institute, Washington, D.C., 1983.

Stahler, G. J., and J. P. DuCette, "Evaluating Adolescent Pregnancy Programs: Rethinking Our Priorities," *Family Planning Perspectives 23(3)*, May/June 1991, pp. 129–133.

Stern, D., E. G. Hoachlander, S. Choy, and C. Benson, *One Million Hours a Day: Vocational Education in California Public Secondary Schools*, University of California, School of Education, Berkeley, June 1985.

Upchurch, D., and J. McCarthy, "Adolescent Child Bearing and High School Completion in the 1980's: Have Things Changed?" *Family Planning Perspectives 21*, 1989, pp. 199–202.

U.S. Bureau of the Census, "Money Income of Households, Families, and Persons in the United States, 1988–1989," *Current Population Reports*, Series P-60, No. 172, 1991.

VandeVeer, L., "Adequacy of Current AFDC Need and Payment Standards," *Clearinghouse Review 21*, 1987, pp. 141–142.

Westat, Inc., "Characteristics of Enrollees Who Entered Adult-Oriented CETA Programs During Fiscal Year 1978," CLMS Report No. 10, January 1980.

WHO, "Adolescent Sexuality and Reproductive Health: Educational and Service Aspects," Geneva, Switzerland, April 28–May 2, 1980.

Zeanah, Charles, M. Keener, T. Anders, and B. Vieria-Baker, "Adolescent Mothers' Perceptions of Their Infants Before and After Birth," *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry 57*, 1987, pp. 351–360.

Zellman, G., *The Response of the Schools to Teenage Pregnancy and Parenthood*, RAND, R-2759-NIE, April 1981.

Zelnik, M., and J. F. Kantner, "Sexual Activity, Contraceptive Use and Pregnancy Among Metropolitan-Area Teenagers: 1971–1979," *Family Planning Perspectives 12*, 1980, pp. 230–237.